

# THE CHRISTIAN REVIEW.

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## ART. I.—REVIEW OF THE STRAUSSIAN THEORY.

*The Life of Jesus*; critically examined by DR. DAVID FRIEDRICH STRAUSS. Translated from the Fourth German Edition by MARION EVANS. New York: Published by CALVIN BLANCHARD, 1855.

THAT Germany is now recovering from her sad aberration, and is fast imbibing a more humble and evangelical spirit, and that she repudiates to-day, as earnestly as a people can, the false extravagances of Gospel mythicism, is subject of grateful admission. The theory of Strauss was years ago sifted throughout by her scholars, and afterwards consigned to the silence of the libraries, as a system tried and "found wanting,"—too gross for the philosophers, and too subtle for the common people. It can hardly be said to be working ill at the present stage of German development. Looking to these facts alone, with an impression that silence is the best condition of error, we might feel that the exhortation, "let the dead past bury its dead," might be appropriately suggested to him who should revive the theory, simply for the sake of replying to it. But transferring ourselves to our own country we shall find the aspect of things somewhat changed. Instead of finding our scholars and theologians eager to invent novel systems, we see them often complacently embracing German theories, long before outgrown and inoperative in the land where they originated; so true is it that we

have leaned on foreign speculation, and have awaked at a late hour to what is elsewhere exploded sentiment. Such a fact might lead to the presumption, at least, that our relations to the Straussian theory are at this day different from those of German writers, and hence that our duty in the case may also be different. It is not, indeed, affirmed that our people are, in any considerable degree, imbibing the sentiments of Strauss. God grant that the few potions we have already quaffed of the German infidelity may suffice. And yet the late publication, on a liberal scale, of a new and improved translation of the *Leben Jesu*,\* and the occasional spectacle of an experimenter or novice gloating over its pages, together with the fact of its being a favorite book in the libraries of sceptics, sufficiently indicate that the work is having a circulation and influence among us. The question is, are we already well enough acquainted with the nature and purport of Strauss's book to oppose it intelligently, and prevent its noxious influence? If not, the subject which we have proposed to ourselves in this article is eminently practical, and is one deserving extensive discussion; and, indeed, were it not so practical, did it not bear so directly upon the interests of our holy religion, still we could not be persuaded that it is unnecessary to review a theory so mournfully instructive to the student and the historian of speculative theology.

David Friedrich Strauss was born at Ludwigsburg, in Würtemberg, A. D. 1808. His early studies were pursued mainly at Tübingen. While yet a youth he officiated, for a time, as a country curate. As early as 1831 we find him discharged from his cure, and, in Berlin, listening to the lectures of the Platonistic Schleiermacher. Neander had enjoyed the instructions of the same teacher. But though taught in the same theology, Neander and Strauss went forth with the most different views;—the one with instruments to attack historical Christianity, the other with weapons of defence. Strauss had eagerly seized upon the more airy and doubtful parts of his teacher's *philosophy*; Neander, on the other hand, though not always correct in his theories, has

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\* The work whose title is prefixed to this Article.



based himself on the underlying evangelical stratum of the same teacher's *theology*. The circumstance that these men had been fellow-pupils, will partially account for the fact of Neander's expressing more confidence in the moral purpose of Strauss, than any other opposing theologian in Germany. In A.D. 1835, when only twenty-seven years old, Strauss put forth at Tübingen, the home of his early discipline, the great production which has procured for him his unenviable notoriety. The "Life of Jesus," ponderous with its thousand octavo pages, quickly found its way to every literary table in the country. It agitated the schools to the centre. If a bloody moon had suddenly appeared full in the firmament, men would not have more stared, nor more shuddered. A young man had brought out a critical system, threatening destruction, with the ability, and dignity, and boldness of an older head, and with the cool indifference and great-scaled recklessness of one who knows no control, no accountability.

The work of Strauss passed quickly through three editions. A thousand critics whetted their knives against him. The calm persistent defence of the Evangelical History by Neander, with the help of other strong minds, had succeeded in weakening Strauss's confidence in his first positions. He recanted, therefore, some of his bolder statements, and the two editions which succeeded the first, were essentially modified in their doctrine. But now, finding himself committed to such views as would, if carried out to their legitimate results, undermine his entire system, he rushes back to his old post, expressing himself as chagrined with his own compliance. Accordingly, in some remarks accompanying the fourth edition of his work, published in A. D. 1840, he says:

The intermingling voices of opponents, critics, and fellow-laborers, to which I held it a duty attentively to listen, has confused the idea of the work in my mind. In the diligent comparison of divergent opinions, I had lost sight of the subject itself. Hence, on coming with a more collected mind to this last revision I found alterations at which I could not but wonder, and in which I had evidently done myself injustice. In all these passages the earlier readings are now restored; and thus my labor in this new edition has chiefly consisted in whetting, as it were, my good sword, to free it from the notches made in it rather by my own grinding than by the blows of my enemies.

Hence the Strauss whom we approach now is the Strauss of the first onset, only a little harder and fiercer grown. It is to be expected that men who publish bold sentiments in their youth, will find occasion to alter or modify those views permanently in more advanced life. This is amply illustrated in the cases of Fichte in Germany, and Macaulay in England. But here is Strauss persistent to defend to the letter his early scheme; and now, at the age of forty-eight, his first speculations are become favorite tenets, former fancies are now his creed.

In order to a distinct appreciation of the position which Strauss occupies, and the proper grounds and spirit of his system, it is necessary briefly to review the progress of German infidelity, till its legitimate ripening in the mythical theory. We shall find the roots, and the stock upon which blossomed the night-flower of Straussism, far down the preceding years. Of course we can only notice that line of theological opinion in its more marked stages, which terminated in this theory, without referring to the counteracting force of the orthodox systems.

On the reaction which succeeded the great Reformation of the sixteenth century, there arose a progressive class of deists and sceptics, who opposed Christianity with the same weapons as Porphyry, Celsus and Julian had employed in the early ages of the Church. According to the laws of action and reaction, we are naturally to expect the appearance of the most angry opponents to Christianity immediately on the passage of the periods of its most triumphant success. So it was in the third and fourth centuries of the Church, when the leaven of the new truth had so permeated and changed society as to give new occasion to the saying, that "the world was turned upside down." So it was in the two centuries immediately following the Reformation. The mighty demonstration of the power of the Gospel of Christ, in its self-strengthening and aggression, could not be manifested without exciting the sharpest hostility of Satan's emissaries. Observe now the changing aspect of the opposition. At first it raves. Argument is neglected. Those who started forth after the glorious conquests of the sixteenth century despised all reason,

and boldly denounced the Gospel as a wild and senseless scheme. Such was the madness of the first outbreak. But soon the rising class of opponents, without softening at all their real hostility, resort to forms of reason, and push their offence with an air of learning. Their course is well defined. On certain assumed grounds they proceed to argue against Divine revelation. They summon every energy, ply every instrument, to undermine the Word of God. A part is reasoned away, and a part, indeed, peremptorily denied. This we find to be the general process during the seventeenth century, when the haters of the Gospel had become more crafty and cool.

"The deists of those times," says our author, "renewed the polemic attacks of the pagan adversaries of Christianity in the bosom of the Christian Church; and gave to the public an irregular and confused mass of criticisms impugning the authenticity and credibility of the Scriptures, and exposing to contempt the events recorded in the Sacred Volume."

These deists appear to have consisted of several classes. One denied to the Bible some of its distinguishing features; another excluded whole books. Now, it is asserted that the Jewish Religion cannot be a revelation from God, because, as they allege, it debases God to participation in every form of cruelty. Again, the miracles of the Bible are the subject of essential contempt; and then assaults are made upon the New Testament with the extremest abandonment of deistical ire.

Thus proceeded this reckless work. England appears to have been its chief agent till the beginning of the eighteenth century, when Germany, with more policy and more culture, seized upon the wild idea of destroying the force of the Scriptures. And it was indeed her prerogative, if any should claim it. With her general adaptedness and discipline for the work of literary and historical criticism, she added the trait of stolid indifference to the results of speculation, and plunged full length into the raging element of Deism. The watchword went round, and the cold-hearted work began. The product was natural. It will be enough to mention the "Wolfenbüttel Fragments," aptly termed *a refined deistical extraction*, alike the result and the representative of the first



period of the regular German scepticism. These 'Fragments' at first fell heavy upon the times; but, edited anew, and published under the direction of Lessing in 1774, they excited unusual attention. The leading idea of the Fragmentist, Reimarus, was, that the Scriptures were but the record of one grand continuous system of fraud from beginning to end. He says, that even if God saw fit to work miracles, it would be by men less criminal than Moses, and if he chose to make communications to the world, it would be through men more reliable than the patriarchs and prophets! But yet he contends that miracles and all Divine communication are at once incredible and absurd, even granting that Moses and the prophets were not so bad; thus alternating his assumptions. He considers

the aim of Jesus to have been political; and his connection with John the Baptist a preconcerted arrangement, by which the one party should recommend the other to the people.

#### He views

the death of Jesus as an event by no means foreseen by himself, but which frustrated all his plans: a catastrophe which his disciples knew not how else to repair than by the fraudulent pretence that Jesus was risen from the dead, and by an artful alteration of his doctrines.

But even the mind of the unorthodox must soon recoil from the monstrous accusatory exposition of the Fragmentist, notwithstanding its continued infidelity; and hence a new interpretation was sought, which, while it denied the supernatural character of the Bible, would yet exclude all probability of fraudulent design on the part of those who penned its records or figured on its pages. Upon this, then, a new period of the unsanctified criticism was ushered in, and a distinct class of theologians rose up, who agreed with the Fragmentist in rejecting the miraculous element in the Scriptures, and so far were *Naturalists*, but who differed from the proper *Naturalists* in exalting the characters of Scripture from designing and deceitful men to an honorable position among the race, and in giving a new and more highly rational interpretation to the Divine word, especially in those parts which had previously been thought to teach miracles. They rationalized everything, and were denominated *Rationalists*



proper, though often called Naturalists in general reference. The Rationalists were the great class of speculators who overran Germany during the last part of the eighteenth, and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. Some of them rested satisfied with applying their mode of interpretation to the Old Testament alone. But what could be so easily explained away in the Old Testament as miracles, must share a like fate in the New Testament. Accordingly, we are not to wait long before we see the entire fabric of revelation taken down piece by piece in the soft insinuating way of rationalism; and the long chain of wonderful manifestations through the full length of the Bible, is smoothed away into a tame record of common transactions and man's most innocent self-deception. We have, then, the history not of deceiving, but of deceived men. To Dr. Paulus belongs the peculiar credit of flattening down the last record of the Bible into human ribaldry and silliness; and with the accomplishment of such a result closed the work of the Rationalists, and the second period of modern German scepticism.

The latter system was as philosophically connected with the former as it is possible for two great theories to be whose guiding principle is hostility to the full truth of God's Word. If rationalism made a less summary and slaughterous attack upon Christianity than pure naturalism, it was concocted out of not a whit more love for the system itself. The old deism was full of spite, and in madness employed naturalism as a slayer. Rationalism was speculative and wary, and used naturalism as a stepping-stone from which to steal the heart of Revelation. The deistical haters and open fighters of our religion do demand a shadow of respect, while the cunning rationalistic dissolvers and under-thrusters of it, with all their suspicious pretensions of honesty, with all their thousand low resorts, merit thorough contempt. These, forsooth, make our Saviour out to be a very virtuous man, but really stultified and self-deceived, believing he wrought miracles when he did not in fact, and going about the earth more like a drifting dreamer than a man of sense and purpose. To them, Goethe's poor straying Wilhelm Meister was a character of definite purpose compared with Jesus Christ,

and the Mephistopheles of that same author, milk-and-water character as he was, was not half so insipid as the Jesus of extreme rationalism. The old system did, at least, have the vigor of hatred and the heart spite, but the new appropriating much of the old shell for its form, was without its soul. In the old, there appeared at least the motive of fraud to prompt the activities represented in Scripture; but in the new, motive was banished. Those beings of the Bible, those transactions, were for no purpose. Things drifted along down its pages as a rudderless ship on the sly currents of a waveless sea.

And so this trifling with revealed truth was extended and popularized. The tide at first set to rolling amidst the most angry eddies now moved on almost unimpeded, though destined to a self-terminated career. We have seen exhibited two principal aspects of infidelity on the German soil. But the *third* is to come. Human systems tire. The speculations of men have ever been changeful. Those schemes, planned in the absence of truth and conscience, betray often speedily their own hollowness. Satan is restive. Necessity as well as device leads him to change his points and methods of attack. He is an experimenter; and, besides, avails himself of philosophy, as is evinced in the fact that the schemes of his agents often grow out of others in a consequential way. Hence we read the history of evil times, and account for measures; hence, too, we can anticipate future methods and turns. During the primary epoch of German resistance to the Bible, we beheld the grossest allegations against the actors of Revelation. A decent respect for God's truth, which is, after all, one of the hardest sentiments to eradicate from the human breast, was maintained, provided an optional interpretation of its contents was allowed. But though time-honored records, in the letter, were still tenacious of their hold upon the mind, ingenuity and malignity, as we have seen, combined their art and ire first to draw the divine life out of the sacred Word, and then make selfishness the grand motor from Genesis to Revelation. But the soberer reflection of the philosophers on the one hand, and the common sense of the people on the other, compelled a more char-

itable treatment of the Bible. The conduct of the opposition must be changed. Hence, in the second epoch, Moses and Jesus are put into better repute, or at least not so *offensive*. But the Word really has no more life or noble intent. The Bible, outwardly, is indeed retained, but only as the product and history of a mediocre humanity. This system, too, wrought its work, and was becoming distasteful. The absurdity and ridiculousness of the thousand *natural* explanations were too manifest. Human ingenuity must be tasked for a new development in the warfare upon the holy Word. And what shall it be? Can we not almost anticipate? We should be ready to answer, we think either a reaction must come next, or else a last plunge and a total rejection of Scripture. Policy, pride, and irreligion must combine to prevent the former. The same added to the blinding influence of a delusion will insure the latter. The Scriptures long pressed into insipidity, long interpreted into stale narration, will become, eventually, offensive. It is the literal truth and intense inner meaning of God's Word that give it its abiding attractiveness and force. Let these be filtered or filched away, and respect for the outward shape sooner or later dies. We should expect then that the next period in this course of centrifugal speculation, would be characterized by the widest divergence of respect for the *form* as well as the substance. The form had been for a long time retained simply to answer the ends of policy, and avoid the last violence to the sentiment of reverence. Again, too, there is a subjective principle even in mad philosophers which impels to new speculation for its own sake. Hence a change. Thus not only is some new development shown to be a necessity, but somewhat of its character is evolved as a logical consequent.

But let us see how far facts confirm our philosophy, in the examination of some of the features of the next infidel epoch:

"It was impossible," says Strauss,\* "to rest satisfied with modes of proceeding so unhistorical on the one hand and so unphilosophical on the other. Added to which, the study of mythology now became far more

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\* Introduction of the "*Leben Jesu*."



general and more prolific in its results, and exerted an increasing influence on the views taken of Biblical history. Eichorn had indeed insisted that all primitive histories, whether Hebrew or Pagan, should be treated alike. But this equality gradually disappeared; for, though the mythical view became more and more developed in relation to profane history, the *natural* mode of explanation was still rigidly adhered to for the Hebrew records. All could not imitate Paulus, who sought to establish consistency of treatment by extending the same natural explanation which he gave to the Bible to such also of the Greek legends as presented any points of resemblance; on the contrary, opinion in general took the opposite course, and began to regard many of the Biblical narratives as *mythi*. Semler had already spoken of a kind of Jewish mythology, and had even called the histories of Samson and Esther *mythi*. Eichorn, too, had done much to prepare the way, now further pursued by Gabler, Schelling, and others, who established the notion of the *mythus* as one of universal application to ancient history, sacred as well as profane, according to the principle of Heyne: *A mythis omnis priscorum hominum cum historia tum philosophia procedit.*"

In 1820, Bauer ventured so far as to publish a Hebrew mythology from materials in the Old and New Testaments. De Wette, too, advocated a mythical interpretation of much of the Old Testament, accepting it as the proper alternative in rejecting the natural mode of explanation, which, by its own unnaturalness, he thinks, ever brings us back to the mythical. No supernaturalist was ever more zealous and diligent to expose and riddle the obsolescent modes of naturalism than the new theorizers who were struggling into existence. Although affecting to have more pleasure in the antecedent infidel systems than in the staunch old orthodox methods, they yet reacted against the former with a thoroughness of critical learning, which has continued to gratify many lovers of truth who may have no sympathy with the alternative which the mythologists chose for themselves. During the formation of the mythical theory, an anonymous writer in Bertholdt's Journal expressed himself in language like this:

The essential defect of the natural interpretation, as exhibited in its fullest development in Paulus's Commentary, is its unhistorical mode of procedure. It allows conjecture to supply the deficiencies of the record, adopts individual speculations as a substitute for real history; seeks by vain endeavors to represent that as natural which the narrative describes as supernatural, and, lastly, evaporates all sacredness and divinity from the Scriptures, reducing them to collections of amusing tales no longer meriting the name of history. This insufficiency of the *natural* mode of interpretation whilst the *supernatural* also is felt to be unsatisfactory, leads the mind to the *mythical view*, which leaves the substance of the narrative unassailed, and instead of venturing to explain the details, accepts the whole, *not indeed as true history, but as a sacred legend!*



The process, as in former systems, was gradual. At first the mythical theory was applied to portions of the Old Testament. Then, as the obstacles of prejudice and lingering scrupulousness gave way, the whole canon of that Book was soon distilled in the mythical alembic. But the laws and prophecies, the miracles and men of the Old Testament, being once admitted to be the figments and the fashions of legend, the impetuous tide would not long wait at the New. The latter is quickly regarded as a necessary subject of the mythical application. It is interesting to watch the new theory as it took up little by little into itself the Gospel narrative. In the first place, the accounts of the Saviour's birth are set down as an innocent fiction; and then the Resurrection and Ascension are brought into the category of myths. Here waited for a time the new criticism, as if some last presentiment forbade to etherealize the body itself of the Gospel histories.

Thus the two extremities were cut off by the pruning-knife of criticism, whilst the essential body of the history, the period from the baptism to the resurrection, remained unassailed.

Or, in the words of the reviewer of Greiling's *Life of Jesus*,

The entrance to the Gospel history was through the decorated portal of the Mythos, and the exit was similar to it; whilst the intermediate space was still traversed by the crooked and toilsome paths of natural interpretations.

The miracles of the intermediate portion, over which so many stumbled, were next easily disposed of as pure myths.

Many years and many minds were occupied in carrying so far forward the dazzling enterprise of sacred mythicism. But it remained for the bold and youthful Strauss to push on the system to its broadest application—to its legitimate terminus. He applied the last stroke and completed the process. And now the entire Gospel history, like the Old Testament, is merged in the same collection with Greek mythology and old wives' fables; and David Friedrich Strauss stood at the head of the advocates of the mythic theory, as Paulus, before, had of rationalism, and Reimarus, of pure naturalism;—the doubtful *three*, who must continue to enjoy the unenviable honor of being held as the responsible

representatives of their several systems. Neither angels nor men could desire to view the strange satisfaction of these men, as each laid on the cap-stone of his edifice! With the last exultation of each must have gone a sting to his deepest consciousness, converting his soul to the hardness of adamant. Their joy at the completion of their work must have resembled that of the fiend when he retired from his successful exploit in Eden.

Destitute of that moral sensibility which would be touched by the affecting story of the Gospel, and long taught to regard the Scriptures as a weak secular production, Strauss, with his constituents, easily sundered the last shred that attached them to their truth, and swung off fully upon the fairy ocean of their own imagination. A plausible system must be produced in order to exclude, with a show of logical exposition, the very letter of the Bible; and so a requisition is made upon mythology, and a third distinctive theory comes forth full grown.

Thus we have endeavored to trace the rise and growth of Straussism. Its roots we have found in the early opposition to the work of the Reformation; its stalk was jointed naturalism and rationalism. But, in contemplating the history of the development of the new theory, let us be again reminded that affection and respect for God's Word, undermined by the busy operations of two centuries, were entirely lost before that word was put to sleep in the mythic shades. And thus the philosopher who failed to retrace his steps and return to the first truths of Revelation, was driven to escape to some retreat like mythicism to account for his last infidelity to fact and sacredness. Arrived here to behold this last wreck, an indescribable sense of heart pain comes upon us; and as we come up nearer to Strauss, and begin to view the world and God from his stand-point, we shudder. We feel somehow transferred to a silent burning sea of witchery, and a copper, lurid sky, not unlike that in which the Ancient Mariner suffered his affecting ills; and in our reflections his simple lines are involuntarily uttered:

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropped down,  
'Twas sad as sad could be.

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Day after day, day after day  
We stuck, no breath nor motion,  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean.  
Water, water everywhere,  
And all the boards did shrink;  
Water, water everywhere,  
Nor any drop to drink.

Having glanced at those developments in Biblical criticism which finally resulted in the adoption of the mythical view, perhaps we are prepared now to look more particularly into the nature of the attack of Strauss, considered in itself, apart from its antecedents. Strauss opens his inquiry with the forestalled and expressed conviction that the Gospel accounts are "the empty husk of historical semblance." Ignoring at once the possibility of Divine revelation, he sees nothing higher and deeper in the written Gospel than mere dead fragments thrown together by the careless hand of accident. And he proceeds with foregone conclusions, and a mass of sly presuppositions, to inquire if these records of the Evangelists can be historical. The early testimony to the genuineness of the Gospels is first reviewed with a summariness quite unworthy of Strauss's acknowledged ability. This he finds uncertain, contradictory, and entirely inconclusive. The usual external evidences being thus disposed of, in a sort of scramble, as at best doubtful, it is left to the Gospels themselves to decide the question of their genuineness by their internal grounds of evidence. Their unhistorical order, their apparent inconsistencies, their accounts of *miracles*, (and here, let it be observed, is a presumption essential to his whole system,) these and minor considerations of various forms, are deemed quite sufficient to overturn the already doubtful external testimony, and sweep the field clear for the setting up of his forthcoming establishment. He gives a blast from his horn, and the few intruding spectres that appear to prevent his full approach are dispersed at once far out of sight, and he swings in with his imposing array, with all the complacency of a man suspecting least of all his own imperfection. It is most of all amusing to observe with what absence of self-distrust he sets aside the opinion of



men, forsooth, discards all presumptions and preconceived notions, calls uproariously for candor and impartiality, and then, with expressions of great personal sincerity, proceeds to his beautiful task.

The next inquiry of Strauss is, how to account for the existence of these unguenuine writings. He has read the stories of the heathen deities, and the tales of the Mussulman respecting his prophet; he has pored over the legends of the battles of the gods, the loves of Krishna, Jupiter, and the rest, the mythus of Apollo and Marsyas; and he recognizes in these the same qualities which he has been accustomed to find in the Bible. In the latter he thinks is the same tendency to the marvellous and extravagant, the same admixture of what we have been accustomed to call supernatural and miraculous, the same ascribing of results to the immediate agency of Divine power, as exists in the heathen mythology and in the deliverances of every ignorant tradition. But every legend of marvels and incongruities outside of the Bible, has by universal consent come to be regarded as the fiction of an aboriginal imagination, and more technically termed a *mythus*. The Bible, and especially the Gospels, then, being not unlike foreign legends, cannot be otherwise characterized than as fictions, legendary or mythical.

Mythology, Strauss regards as the natural product of the religious idea of man. There has ever been a subjective feeling seeking to represent itself objectively. This feeling, this pure religiousness, will catch at the slightest incident of remotest correspondence, and centre around it the numberless fictions of its own imagination. Not always, even, is there an actuality to which to attach its creations, but the whole is pure fancy. Such creativeness, such imagery, is the normal working of religion. The mythical element, which is color and fiction, is, then, only wanting. It is amongst the low and barbarous Esquimaux, that we find religion not yet drawn out into objective forms. It is in such refined philosophers as Strauss and his coadjutors, that we find the mind raised to a conception of the divine Unity without the medium or necessity of objective forms. The Jews were periodically impressed with the *religious idea*; and first giving



outward representation to this idea, afterwards believed their own fictions. Thus it was in reference to the Mosaic accounts; thus it was in the times of kings and prophecy. But it was nearly nineteen hundred years ago that the Jewish people were especially charged with the development of that religion which we call Christianity. They had been laboring under the weighty impression of a new religious sentiment. Their new conceptions, self-begotten, were struggling for outward shape. An ordinary man of common virtue claims to be the living expression of the great thought of the age, the very Christ. Full of the lofty *idea*, the Jews, partly in his lifetime and in the first few succeeding years, attached to the person and advent of the man named Jesus, purely by force of imagination, nearly all those matters we find recorded in the Evangelical narratives. The miraculous conception, journeys, conversations, miracles, prophecies, sublime instructions of Jesus, and then his resurrection and ascension; in fact, everything which we have been accustomed to connect with the Saviour, as so dear to Christian hearts, as so sublime in manifestation, except a common existence, a few benevolent acts, a few innocent but unwarranted claims, and his possessing the rank of a Rabbi, are construed as the myths of fancy, the fictions of legend. So great is the havoc wrought upon the Gospels.

A recent defender\* of the truth, however, striving to shape Strauss's theory so as the better to append a favorite reply, says that Strauss rejects only the miraculous part of the Gospels, and admits a "broad basis of historical truth." But this is so far from being a veracious or adequate statement respecting Strauss, that it is only to be excused on the ground that the writer wishes to flaunt, in the opening of his argument, with an excessive air of liberality. The truth is, and the conviction deepens on every perusal of the "*Leben Jesu*," that Strauss intends daringly and steadily to strip the Christian narratives of every fact or implication which has in any way been sweet to the reflection of the follower of Jesus. The Gospels are left, after his raging criticisms,

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\* Young, in his popular work, entitled "*Christ of History*."

much in the condition of the site of a city or forest which the devouring element has suddenly swept over: only here and there a smoking ruin remains to mark the place where life, beauty, and magnificence were lately manifest.

Strauss admits a difficulty in conceiving how narratives, like the Gospels, which thus speak of imagination as a reality, can have been formed without intentional deceit, or believed without unexampled incredulity. But he thinks that if this be an objection, it applies with equal force to the heathen legends; and if profane mythology has steered clear of the difficulty, the Bible will not founder upon it. In both the heathen and the Jewish mythology the myths grew up gradually, and almost unconsciously to the people.

The mythus is not the work of one man, but of a whole body of men and of succeeding generations; the narrative passing from mouth to mouth, and, like a snowball, growing by the involuntary addition of one exaggerating feature from this, and another from that, narrator. In time, however, these legends are sure to fall into the way of some gifted minds, which will be stimulated by them to the exercise of their own poetical, religious, or didactic powers. Most of the mythical narratives which have come down to us from antiquity, are presented to us in this elaborated form.

Thus the Gospel myths, self-impelled, and by slow accretion, assumed finally a definite character. Geniuses, then,—as he must acknowledge our Gospel writers to be,—seizing upon them, have given them to us in their present shape. These the people having themselves first produced would quickly receive. The writers might add something, but they themselves would easily believe their own interpolations; for they would argue,—Such and such things must have been connected with the Messiah whenever he comes: Jesus is the Messiah; therefore, such and such things were connected with him. On no account is an *invention* of the mythus, in the proper sense of the word, conceivable. The hundred years which Strauss assumes to have elapsed before the Gospels were written, were not too short a time, he thinks, for perfecting the floating mythi; for the greater part did not begin during that period, but have their rise in the legends of the Old Testament. The expectation of a Christ, dim and varying it may be, had started up amongst the Israelitish people long antecedent to the advent of Jesus, and just then

had ripened into full maturity. All the Messianic ideas which the Old Testament contained, and which, besides, had largely lodged in the minds of the expectant Jews, would be transferred to Jesus, with but few changes to suit the times and the ordinary circumstances of his life, in the brief period between his birth and the writing of the Gospels. Thus only a few mythi would need to originate in the actual time of Christ. Such views are deemed by Strauss quite adequate to preclude every suspicion of doubtful design in the formation, or credulity in the reception of the "rich collection of Gospel myths."

In presenting the extent of mythic creation in the Gospels, Strauss is not the man to fetter himself in the outset by any narrow definitions, but gives sufficient breadth to his *mythus* to cover pure fictions, half historical accounts, legends, and gratuitous amplifications of the author. The generic name *evangelical mythus* he applies to every narrative directly or indirectly relating to Jesus, which may be considered not as the expression of a fact, but as the product of an idea of his earliest followers. Of this there are several specific forms. The *pure mythus* is the clearest fiction of the Gospel narrative, originating in whatever way. This fiction may be modified by some particular impression which the facts of Jesus' life made, or may be left free to take its character solely from the religious imagination. Examples of the pure mythus are the rending of the veil of the temple and the Transfiguration.\* The *historical mythus* has for its groundwork a definite historical fact, which has been seized upon by religious enthusiasm, and twined around with mythical conceptions culled from the idea of a Christ. This mythus may be reared on a single saying of Jesus, as the stories of the barren fig-tree and the draught of fishes; or it may be founded on some act of the Saviour, as the mythical traits in the accounts of his Baptism. *Legend* is the proper term to be applied to those occasional "parts of the history which

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\* It was the design of the writer to present more at length examples illustrative of Strauss's method of applying these mythi, drawn from the *Leben Jesu*; but diverting as would be such a discussion, this must be omitted from want of space.



are characterized by indefiniteness and want of connection, by misconstruction and transformation, by strange combinations and confusion,—the natural results of a long course of oral transmission;" or it may be applied to "those parts distinguished by highly-colored and pictorial representations." Thus, the account pertaining to the woman of Samaria, would be a legend of the first character; and certain parts in the history of the last days of Christ, would be instances of the second species of the legend. It will be observed that while in the case of the pure and historical myth the *idea* is clothed by an immediate and direct act of the imagination, the legend is formed through uncertain tradition as it goes from mouth to mouth, or in some moment of high-wrought and crazed enthusiasm. The latter would owe its existence to a lack of veracity, memory, or consecutive thought, the former to a fruitful imagination. The last unhistorical element which Strauss mentions, is the *addition of the author*. Of course this part will be regarded as made up of the remnants which ingenuity cannot adjust under the other divisions, or which contemporary history does not snatch from the ruthless hand of an unsanctified criticism.

The mythical champion having given himself the widest liberty in definition, is equally liberal in furnishing the *criteria* by which to distinguish what is unhistorical in the Gospel narrative. The criteria are supplied in two principal classes: the *negative*, which are suggested by that phase of the mythus in which it appears simply as *not history*, and the *positive*, which are postulated by that phase of the mythus that is distinguished as obvious *fiction*. Of the negative criteria there are two kinds: (1.) When the substance of narration is irreconcilable with the known laws which govern the course of events, then it must be set down as a mythus. The chain of secondary causes must not be disturbed by an arbitrary, unusual act of interposition. By no means, then, can divine apparitions, voices from heaven, miracles, or prophecies, be admitted as historical. Neither must the long-established laws of succession, increase and decrease, be violated or superseded. Hence, for instance, if we are told of a celebrated man having already at his birth attracted the



attention and homage which could only be appropriate to his manhood, we are not to credit, at all, the tale. Nor, finally, can psychological laws be infracted in such a way as to suppose the Jewish Sanhedrim believed at once the report of the watch, that Jesus had risen from the dead, or John recollected faithfully the long discourses of Jesus. (2.) When an account is inconsistent with itself, or is in contradiction to other accounts, it has all the marks of being a mythus. It will be seen at once that this criterion is very useful for the purpose of the mythists. For the cases where, in absence of all candor, discrepancy in the records can be represented to exist, by the enemies of the Gospel, are not a few. It is heart-sickening to see verse after verse and chapter after chapter, in cold recklessness, by the light of this criterion, sacrificed to the rapacious mythus. But so it is, wherever there is the first indication of contradiction, wherever the least shade of inconsistency can be made out by the use of an ever-varying and deceitful stand-point, the sacred text is sentenced. Even the silence of one author upon a point of which another speaks, is put down as sufficient evidence that the partially-testified passage is a mythical formation, with no thought that the identical reasoning would prove that it was not a generally received mythus, and so might be a forgery or a *nothing*! Especially, too, if the Evangelists chance to vary their order of narrative, it is a trace of mythicism.

The positive criteria are: (1.) As to form—

If the form be poetical, if the actors converse in hymns and in a more diffuse and elevated strain than might be expected from their training and situation, such discourses, at all events, are not to be regarded as historical.

(2.) As to substance—

If the contents of a narrative strikingly accord with certain ideas existing and prevailing within the circle from which the narratives proceeded, which ideas themselves seem to be the product of preconceived opinions rather than of practical experience, it is more or less probable, according to the circumstances, that such a narrative is of mythical origin.

The principal peculiarity of this criterion is its convenient pliancy and ridiculous indefiniteness. The characteristics of the *legend* and of the *additions* of the author will be obvious.

But there is one sign of the mythus, not included above, which deserves particular statement, both on account of its singular novelty and its indispensableness when the mythical dissector is at his wit's end for a better device: When an account which by itself would be unsuspected, is given in connection with another portion which has already been consigned by the criteria, then the former account, being in bad company, has suspicion reflected upon it, thus justifying the presumption that it, too, is a mythus.

It is the method of the critical portion of the *Leben Jesu* to examine the incidents of each narrative, first from the supernaturalistic, and secondly from the rationalistic point of view, and, finally, to apply the mythical tests. It is needless to say that the last application is accompanied with pleasing success to the author in every case, and, with imagined triumph, he seems at last to retire in the halo of his grand *ignis fatuus*. Strauss confesses that a single one of his tests will rarely prove more than the possible or probable unhistorical character of the record. But whenever, as is the case in most instances, several criteria concur in their testimony, the result is certain. The narrative so tried is a *bona fide* mythus.

There are two apologetic considerations which ease the conscience of Strauss in this wholesale proscriptive criticism. The first is, that his work results in the reconciliation of Christianity with the advancing intelligence of mankind. The human mind in its development through successive ages becomes impatient of the old definitions, and throws off the conclusions of the olden time as a lifeless shell. In its independent strides it wearies of a philosophy which denies, in any case, the agency of natural causes, and believes in miraculous interpositions. The new mind sees everywhere connections, and an inviolable uniformity in the working of nature's laws, while the old conjectured often an inconceivable hiatus between a result and the great original cause. This casting off, therefore, of the hamperings and marvels of the superannuated Christian records being recognized as a necessity, it is a most grateful task to him who contributes to such an end. The second apology which our critic offers is, that although he should remove the last foundation of his-

torical Christianity, the *essence* of Christian faith, as a subjective experience, is genuine and eternal, and is so far independent of his criticism. Acknowledging that he has apparently annihilated the greatest part of what the Christian has been wont to believe concerning Christ, has uprooted many of the animating motives and consoling data which he has gathered from his faith,—has seemingly dissipated the boundless store of truth and life which for eighteen centuries has been the aliment of humanity,—he yet consoles himself with the unreal and impracticable *idea* that “the supernatural birth of Christ, his miracles, his resurrection and ascension, remain eternal truths” in the consciousness of the believer, unrelated to any outward fact. And so no injury is done to Christianity! The theory of Strauss, then, revolves to its original presupposition! No God above Nature and her invariable laws, and hence no Christ beyond the conceptions of the intellect.

It has been thought best to give so full a view of the rise and nature of the Straussian theory, in the first place because it was due to the author, in the second place because any good appreciation of it could hardly be obtained from a briefer exposition, and, finally, because it seemed that an articulate statement of the ground and contents of the system would carry with it, to reflecting minds, its own refutation; whereas a less comprehensive presentation might simply confound without instructing or deciding the mind.

The position of Strauss is already, and had been, by way of anticipation, prior to the appearance of his work, sufficiently controverted by the overwhelming accumulation of critical and historical Biblical literature, fitted to establish and illustrate the consistency and entire credibility of the Gospel narratives. The whole subject has been canvassed throughout; and to indicate that learned and critical inquiry, that “advancing intelligence,” that intellectual development, has neither its satisfaction nor its issue in rejecting historical Christianity, it is competent to adduce the grateful fact that at no time since the third century of the Gospel has there been such an intelligent and universal acquiescence in that great fact, as at the present day,—a day in which there is an



unequalled dissemination of knowledge, and a spirit of research not so fearless in any age.

It is proposed, in the few following pages, to make out a course of argument which may be sustained against the theory of Strauss. Parts of this argument have been urged in connection with a critical investigation of the Gospel text, or separately in a general form. The most thorough procedure would be, no doubt, to rout our author from his original stand-point in Pantheism, or, more personally, in Hegelianism; and for this purpose we should adduce those arguments which have been employed with great effect to prove that there is a God hyperphysical, and superintending, after the counsel of his own will, the complicated concerns of his Universe. The position of Strauss is manifestly sunk in a refined Pantheism. His earliest education and most prominent sceptical proclivities were in that direction. The pre-suppositions and most incidental affirmations made in the very genesis of his attack, are significant of his prevailing bias and creed. His Hegelianism gives absolute fixedness to the workings of his Deity, from everlasting to everlasting; and grounded in such a notion the fair conception of any such thing as a miraculous dispensation, is to him not only unreasonable but impossible. Whoever, therefore, convinces Strauss himself of his greatest errors in the *Leben Jesu* will have to employ the *argumentum ad hominem*, and effect an entire change in his view of the relation of the Supreme Being to the works of nature. But, for us, at this time, it will be enough to examine the system itself thus built, confessedly, on pantheistic foundations.

I. The external evidences which go to establish the credibility of our four Gospels as the genuine works of their reputed authors, are as conclusive as those that are alleged in support of the genuineness of any other work of antiquity. At the end of the third century, we find that the Gospels were not only received by the large body of Christians as credible, but were, in fact, the text-book of a national religion. Near the close of the second century, we have Clement and Tertullian, and a little later, Origen, all writers of *undisputed* veracity, unitedly testifying to the authenticity

of these narratives. They say, moreover, that, in their time, the Gospels were received without contradiction by the whole Church of God under heaven,—a church numbering, by reliable estimate, not less than three millions. These writers quote largely from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, as being entirely authoritative, in that early period, *to themselves, and*, what is of special import, *to their opponents*. Contemporaneously with the two first mentioned lived Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, in Gaul, whose testimony is to the same effect. This Father, besides entertaining the conviction which universal and concordant tradition had produced upon him, had even enjoyed the personal acquaintance and instructions of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, and disciple of the Apostle John. He thus stood in the same relation to the acts and the actors of the earliest Christianity, as the rising generation now stand to the men and the scenes of the American Revolution. Nay, even, in a nearer relation than Strauss himself stood to the works of the Lutheran Reformation. And was the Reformation a fact, or a myth, in the view of Strauss? It will be seen, then, that on the threshold of our inquiry we find a pure vein of testimony running from the earliest preachers through the “beloved disciple,” Polycarp, and Irenaeus, to the end of the second century, and that, too, over a period upon which some writers have cast the most doubt. We find, too, that this testimony is not only not contradicted, but is also supported by an unviolated body of tradition, agreeing to the same result. This general testimony is all the more valuable since it was often given contrary to worldly interest and pleasure. It need not be asked what must have been the controlling occasion, whether a real or fictitious one, of such a settled and favoring consent, as there appears to have been throughout the entire Christian world.

Justin Martyr, who flourished a few years after the death of the Evangelist John, adds important testimony, if more were needed. Although some German writers have disputed at large the correctness of Justin’s statements, it is to be noticed that Strauss himself merely gives him a passing remark, not so much, indeed, doubting that his citations agree with passages in the Gospels, as casting aspersion upon

them because they are in somewhat close connection with things found in the Gospels. The late Prof. Norton,\* an unorthodox theologian, in an admirable discussion, characterized as well by his patience of criticism as by his independence of thought, has, with others, established, with a wonderful accumulation of proof, the reliableness of the evidence usually adduced from Justin. One could not wish for stronger proofs than Prof. Norton has furnished. Says Dr. Lardner,† in his "great storehouse of ancient authority on this subject":

Justin has numerous quotations of our Gospels, except that of Mark, which he has seldom quoted. He quotes them as containing *authentic* accounts of Jesus Christ and his doctrine. He speaks of "memoirs" or records written by "apostles" and their "companions," plainly meaning the apostles and evangelists, Matthew and John, and the companions or disciples of apostles, Mark and Luke. These Gospels were read and expounded in the solemn assemblies of the Christians, as the books of the Old Testament were, and as they had been before in the Jewish synagogue.

It is a notable fact that Celsus, who early doubted the Divine origin of Christianity, in no instance denied the genuineness of its records. Celsus wrote about a hundred years after the time to which we refer the origin of the Gospels; and it is without explanation how a writer so capable of seeing and seizing on every possible advantage against the Christian faith should fail, at a period, too, so early, to bring any accusation against the authorship of the Gospels, especially if that were subject of doubt. He quotes them as being truly written by the apostles and their companions. Porphyry, who called in question the authenticity of the book of Daniel, and opposed Christianity very much in the spirit of Strauss, never says that the authors of the Gospels were other than is claimed. And, finally, the Apostate Julian employs every possible art against our Faith, but never thinks of attacking the authorship of our Gospels,—believes they were written by eye-witnesses of the facts recorded and by their associates.

These testimonies, positive and negative, seem decisive as

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\* Formerly Professor of Biblical Literature in the Divinity School of Harvard University. Author of several works relating to the Gospels.

† Credibility of the Gospel History. Part ii., chap. x., § 9.



to the point urged in this section of our discussion. If so, three of our Gospels were written as early as thirty years after the death of Christ. How much, either in quality, directness, or amount, does the evidence here adduced differ from that which we should naturally and reasonably look for, in confirmation of the authorship we claim for the Gospels? What other external evidence does Strauss demand? If we can be morally certain of the authenticity of any production of a time prior to the century immediately back of us, certainly we cannot be deceived with respect to our Gospels. Strauss passes over these corroborations with a sinuous wile, and having scared up some doubts, having put a double construction on certain unambiguous testimonies, crawls off, like one escaping from a situation peculiarly uncomfortable, to see what he can find elsewhere to justify his mean alarms. But the old testimony is not so easily nodded out of sight. Ghost as it appears to Strauss, it is a ghost that will not leave, but appears to haunt him ever and anon in his critical journey through the Gospels.

But let us inquire, by way of supplement to this branch of our discussion, when Strauss's *mythical* Gospels were written, and whether, even *as mythical*, they be not indeed the work of the very persons claimed by the orthodox as their authors? Were they formed during the first thirty years after Jesus' death? In this case we are to suppose the myths formed, written and believed in one generation. We are to suppose the apostles themselves, deluded by the intoxicating *idea*, and induced not only to believe the greatest and most rapid mythical hallucination of any age, but even to write it for truth. But Strauss, sanguine as he is in urging a rapid application of the Gospel mythus, does not pretend to think that it could have been constructed in this brief interval. For, to use his own words :

It would most unquestionably be an argument of decisive weight in favor of the credibility of the Biblical history, could it indeed be shown that it was written by eye-witnesses, or even by persons nearly contemporaneous with the events narrated.

Thus he is willing to admit that, *as mythical*, the Gospels could *not* have been written in thirty years after Christ, because otherwise he feels they must be authentic. But the

mythus must be sustained. That is always the "previous question." Hence setting aside, by one arbitrary stroke, the history which spreads over the next sixty years, and violating every natural conviction of writers and people in the second century, he boldly claims that the so-called Evangelical histories are *mythi* formed in the progress and written at the end of the first hundred years after Jesus died. They were written then, and attributed by forgery to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, who had, in fact, died a long time before. Thus, whoever adopts the Straussian theory implicates himself in the greatest outrage ever committed against the plainest testimonies of history.

II. It will be felt, from what has been said, that there is a very *low probability* that the claims of Strauss are just. This is the state of the case before we examine other circumstances which properly come in as accompanying data, from which to draw our final conclusion. Let us take into account some strange things involved in, and necessitated by, an adoption of the mythical theory, and see whether our already low probability of its truth is raised or made still lower by such a proceeding.

(1.) It is affirmed on the Straussian principles that the whole of Christianity is to be found in Judaism. In other words, it is said that the character of the Messiah was formed already in the minds of the Jews before the advent of Jesus, while the mythical work of the first hundred years of Christianity was, generally, to apply this ideal character to the person of a human individual. Strauss confesses that the mythus could not, by any hypotheses, have grown up in that century. It was the result of a long series of Jewish conceptions. Now, it is a fact, indeed, that there was a pre-existing idea of the Messiah; but it was quite unlike that which was realized in Christ. Nearly all the anticipations of the Jews, respecting a great Deliverer, seem to have been disappointed and unanswered in Jesus. His self-denying life may be regarded as directly opposite to the self-glorification, national exclusion, and temporal exaltation which they had promised themselves at the coming of Christ. Says a writer in the *Christian Examiner* (Unitarian):

If there be one single fact of history which is indisputable, it is that Jesus did not meet the wishes of his nation ; but, just the contrary, he disappointed them all.

The present three millions of Jews in the world is a living argument against the assumption of Strauss. No nation like the Jewish preserves its old characteristics. Their present existence and prejudices are alike significant. If, then, there was not only not a proper conception corresponding to the Messianic character in Judaism (we mean practical Judaism, as sympathized in by the national mind), but even a contrary conception, the error of our critic is sufficiently manifest, and the case is harder for him than if he had conjectured at once the total uprising of the Gospel mythus after Christ came ; for the removal of an old prejudice is always harder than the inculcation of new ideas.

• (2.) But, supposing Christ to be the actual counterpart of a Jewish religious idea, it still seems hard to account for the notorious fact that the Gentile nations who had come to cherish marked hostility and jealousy towards the Jews, were more ready to receive, and did, in truth, receive, far more extensively, the peculiarly Jewish *conception*, than the Jews themselves.

"The great majority," says a distinguished Biblical scholar, "of those who embraced Christianity before the middle of the second century, consisted of converts from Heathenism."

This must be still more a mystery to a mythologist when it is considered that many of the converts were from the most enlightened philosophical circles.\*

(3.) The early Christian age was characteristically historical. No time, since that in which the barbaric legendary period of Greece became a historical fact, was less fitted for the production and reception of a mythical religious system such as Strauss propounds in the case of the Gospels. Strange that the assumed mythical propensity of that age was not contagious at all to the subsequent periods and to the surrounding races—a fact which neither history nor yet Dr. Strauss has ever communicated. We know that the

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\* But on the orthodox view how apt is the remark of Dr. Arnold : "Greek cultivation and Roman polity prepared men for Christianity."



times of the second century were plainly matter of fact; and even granting the mythical formation of the Gospels, they must have got most thoroughly riddled in the terrible agitations of that period.

(4.) This leads us to another view of the case which is utterly inexplicable on the Straussian supposition, unless, in fact, we make mythicism the great motive principle in society, and not truth and actuality. The power of the doctrines and character brought forth in the Gospels, granting them mythical, has been greater than any objective fact, or collection of facts, since the dawn of time. What has so regenerated and revolutionized mind and heart? The strange *deceptions*, those enchanting *myths*, have nerved the soul of man more than any consideration ever proposed by people or kings. And further still, we would require of Strauss, if he persists to claim this as a proper force of his system, to explain the earnestness, and faith, and the unconquerable spirit of struggle, which so eminently characterized the Christians *before* the all-powerful mythical idea was fully developed at the close of the first century.

(5.) Strauss endeavors to give plausibility to the theory of myths in the Gospels by seeking to compare those writings with the records of the mythical religions of antiquity. But we contend that the Gospel records are entirely different from them. (a) In their origin. Other mythical systems have arisen in the dawn and twilight of time, and not at the very close of national existences. They have been formed, too, by the most gradual process, through vast dark, dim periods, when all is dreamy and chaotic. Thus it was with the legends of India, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Scandinavia, Mexico, and the Pacific Islands. (b) In their relations to intelligence. When Grecian myths were constructed, the people interested and related, had neither education nor literature. Just the contrary was the case of the Jews. And, besides:

All around them were highly cultivated cities and nations: Alexandria, with its gymnasia and schools; Athens, with its intellectual civilization; Arabia, with its treasures of learning; Antioch, famous for its erudition; and Rome, with its philosophers and historians.\*

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\* Putnam's Monthly, No. xxxii., 1855.

(c) In matter and style. The narratives of the Gospel exhibit a character and teach a doctrine surpassing, whatever be their rise, all the compositions of the world in simple beauty and sublimity. The human mind has striven, and striven in vain, to vie with those same Gospels in presenting examples of such pure quality and unique excellence. The style of the Gospels is different from that of any acknowledged myth in the world. In the former we have a natural style, as if used upon matters of experience and certainty. In the latter it is well known that we have an unequal, incongruous expression, and a complexion that betrays the fiction that wears it. (d) In object. For instance, what is there similar in the aims of Homer and Hesiod with those of the Gospel writers? The former wrote, long after their myths were formed, in order to please the fancy and revel with the Muses. The latter, writing exactly in the midst of the materials they employed, wished to furnish the textbook of a new religion. The former wrote to commemorate a dying system; the latter to furnish the institutes of a religion, then in its incipency and long afterwards to reach on to its zenith. A similar comparison might be made between the writings of the Evangelists and the famous apocryphal Gospels. Would not Strauss admit a very significant distinction?

(6.) By the same criticisms which Strauss has applied to the Gospels, all history might be resolved into seminal ideas. In short, the whole past as it receded from us would become a continuous myth. All that would be necessary in order to account for the surprising changes of time to which we have been introduced in history,—revolutions of society and shakings of earth,—would be to suppose a long line of dreamy writers, whose business has been to record the variously evolving idea that has struggled in the silent chambers of their own imagination; which is to suppose the great actions of all time but the mistaken expression of an idea. To use the words of a writer\* on this subject:

On Strauss's principles, all history loses its certainty, and becomes a mere phantom, an illusion. No biography was ever written of any indi-

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\* Professor Hackett, in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. ii., p. 61.

vidual, no history of any kingdom or nation, which may not be resolved into a set of myths as easily as the account of the Saviour contained in the Gospels. All confidence in the past is destroyed; all distinction between the ideal and actual is annihilated; and men can be certain of nothing which has taken place at any period remote at all from their own time, whatever may be the testimony by which it is supported.

It should be stated that several notable characters and events of history have been ironically resolved into mythical fiction by the use of Strauss's rules. The thing is, therefore, equally practicable in sacred and profane history. Thus Luther and the Reformation vanish into thin air.

Such are some of the difficulties that obviously present themselves on the admission of the mythical element into the Gospels. They serve to reduce to the merest assumption the already low probability that myths occupy the place of true history, in the first eventful hundred years of Christianity.

III. Our remarks upon the *criteria* of evangelical myths must necessarily be brief. These, as they have to do with the internal methods of Strauss' criticism, would properly belong to a more critical, point-by-point examination of the work than we profess to give. We shall show, however, in a *general* way, how little execution his instruments are really capable of doing.

(1.) "Accounts of miracles are mythical." This criterion is signalized by Strauss solely on the ground that, to his own mind, miracles are impossible and hence incredible. We have no purpose, at this time, of stating a formal argument to prove the credibility of a miraculous interposition. We believe every attack upon the Gospels because they contain miracles, has been thoroughly repulsed. It answers our purpose to insert simply a statement of Palfrey,\* which he has sustained at length in a strong discussion of this topic:

First, miracles are credible events, provided the circumstances under which they are alleged to have taken place, are ascertained to have been such as might engage the Divine benevolence to address men in the way of an extraordinary interposition; and, secondly, that human testimony to their having been wrought under such circumstances becomes credible as it would be for other transactions, in the proportion of its clearness and strength.

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\* Lowell Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, by J. G. Palfrey, Vol. I. Lect. II.



Those circumstances which form the condition of miracles, are shown to have existed at the time of the original publication of Christianity.

Neither, indeed, does it seem to us that miracles are incredible, if we take into account the common sense of mankind. That has never hesitated to believe in them. So much has it inclined to regard them as possible, that it has often supposed them to occur when they were wanting. It is only a refined uncommon sense philosophy that has ruled them out of all time. Strauss's own admission that the miracles and resurrection of Jesus Christ remain eternal subjective truths, implies that there is nothing in the supposition of miracles contradictory to the sentiment of consciousness. The human mind from the earliest ages has called for an incarnation of Deity, the great miracle of the world;\* and this, too, not as a subjective idea, but as an objective reality. The Christian miracles are probable, too, from the arguments of analogy. Divine interpositions, geologists say, have occurred at certain junctures during the progress and changes of the natural world. If new creations are facts of nature, they may be facts of religion; for the same God who hath ordered the natural world is our moral governor.

In the philosophy of history, writers are accustomed to take some particular age or scene, and search for the great central idea that has governed its movements and changes; and when they have obtained this controlling fact, this leading idea of the time, they seize upon it as the proper standpoint to occupy in making their philosophy and painting their picture. They judge of the validity of the central explaining view which has been seized upon by its adaptedness to account, not merely for the general course of events, but also for the minutest occurrences, processes and phases. Now, in regard to the Christian system, there is some leading idea we must get of it before we can look upon its different parts—its transactions, and make them appear fit and necessary and reasonable. We believe that central point from

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\* See "Christ in History," by Dr. Turnbull; where this thought is drawn out at length, in a scholarly and convincing manner.

which to draw any philosophic notion of our great evangelical system, to be in the thought that it is supernatural. In the idea that Christianity is a miraculous dispensation in externals as well as internals, we have a key to unlock much of the mystery that otherwise attaches to the work of Christ and his disciples, a touchstone which applies successfully alike to transactions and statements of the Gospels. In this idea alone can we find a solution of the mighty problem which has staggered thousands of sceptics; and in that alone can one look forth upon the gospel narratives and behold the entire naturalness and harmony of the doctrine. The fact is, miracles are in accordance with the very genius of Christianity; and whoever is as reasonable in regard to it as he is towards the matters of secular history, will adopt the idea of the miraculous as credible, from its adequateness to explain the greatest division of history.

But once more: If we allow that the true Christ never existed beyond the consciousness of the believer, and that the Jews simply signalized or gave birth to the great *idea*, then we are to suppose that the common people, eighteen hundred years ago, produced, out of their imaginations, the fairest, the most perfect character, as even infidels confess, that was ever brought forth from any other imagination, not even Dante's, or Shakspeare's, or Goethe's, or Homer's; and further, we are to suppose all classes in the Jewish community simultaneously aroused to the same *idea*, and all as one constructing the unique character of all creation. Could there be a greater *miracle* than this sudden and perfect development of the Messianic idea, among the common Jews? And that, too, in *strict* fulfilment of Old Testament myths, as the mythologists please to term the prophecies! There is, then, the necessity of accepting a miracle of nature or a miracle of thought. Of this dilemma, Dr. Strauss, choose your horn.

(2). "Discrepant accounts are myths." This criterion takes it for granted that the Evangelists disagree, or rather contradict each other in their several narratives. Such a supposition has no ground. It arises from a false view of the plan and object of those writings. It is as well estab-

lished as any principle of Biblical criticism can be, that the Gospel writers neither assume nor attempt to write in the historical order, nor yet do they write purposely to corroborate each other, though such a result as the latter may be derived. Again, on the other hand, it cannot be proved that they contradict each other in a single instance, but, indeed, it has been shown that beneath many *apparent* discrepancies there is the finest harmony of statement and occurrence, and that every difficulty is susceptible of a reasonable adjustment. With advancing discovery, with increasing intelligence, the difficulties gradually and permanently disappear. The world's progress, in an emphatic sense, has been a vindication of the harmony and truth of Sacred Writ. But, finally, admit that now and then a contradiction appears on the pages of the Gospels, would that be so certain a reason for setting down the discrepant records as mythical? Todd has said that John Milton was born in 1608, Hallam that he was born in 1609, and yet another historian that he was born in 1606. Is the existence of either history, therefore, in any way mythical? Macaulay and Lingard tell discordant facts about James the Second: there exist the most conflicting statements with regard to the residence of Napoleon Buonaparte upon the island of St. Helena. And yet we believe in the essential facts concerning James the Second and Napoleon Buonaparte.

(3.) "Evangelical accounts rendered in an elevated strain are mythical." "Contents which are accordant with known existing but unusual ideas of the Saviour's time, are mythical." We had intended to illustrate the disingenuousness of these criteria somewhat at length. But our better judgment leads us to dispatch them at once by the appropriate epithet *ridiculous*. They appear to be the last resort of a man determined to filter away the last jot of verity in the sacred books, under a deceitful show of rules. The case would be the same if one called Hare's Sermons mythical, because they are elevated in style and thought; or Washington's Address mythical, because it accorded with the best judgment of the times in which he lived.

IV. After all, Strauss avows his faith in Christ as the in-



separable concomitant of the imagination. When the good, keen Bishop Berkeley had resolved the material world into simple *ideas*, his great difficulty was in making mankind at large believe his theory. He had violated the first principles of human nature. He had opposed the common sense of men. For there was a belief in men more original, more authoritative, more ultimate, than any eccentric speculation, than any fine-spun theory—we mean the primal belief of an external world on the evidence of sense. This first principle was too potent and universal to yield to the eternal pressure of the ideal system. Hence the comparative inefficiency of Berkeley's philosophy. Airy, beautiful, learned, and well-meant, it yet remained, and always will, an unconvincing and an unaccepted speculation of a great and good man. Strauss, too, has constructed his ideal system of theology. But it stands, and ever will stand, a long speculative elaboration which finds no sympathy in the first principles of our nature. Like the system of Berkeley, it violates a primal belief of the consciousness, namely, the natural faith in a sufficient testimony. God seems to have established our intellects in the strong fortresses of first principles, which prevents any successful conquest of our perceptions by the knight-errantry of airy speculation. Strauss admits that the consciousness of the Church and the dictum of his philosophy are at extreme points in regard to Christianity. He seems to feel that the idea of his system will be alike unappreciated and rejected by the common mind. Hence that most singular charge to the rising ministry, that ever escaped the brain of sane or insane man. The theory of Strauss, then, as well by the virtual confession of its author, as by a true principle of philosophy, has neither the basis of an unadulterated consciousness, which is the foundation of all real science, nor yet the quality of adaptation to the wants of universal humanity.\* A theory which presumes to set at nought the

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\* "De quo autem omnium natura consentit id verum esse necesse est."—Cic.

"Radix cognitionis fides."—*Lat. version from Algazil of Bagdad.*

"Consciousness is for the philosopher what the Bible is for the theologian."—*Hamilton.*

"Religion is verified by the wants of our own nature."—*Trench.*

common sense belief in the great testimony of the past, bears the unmistakable traces of its own falsity.

We have no wish to draw a parallel between Strauss and Berkeley any further than our present comparison has led us; for no comparison can be found between the moral purposes and perceptions of the two men. Berkeley felt a deep concern for the moral welfare of the race. Strauss, in this regard, has manifested the coldest indifference. Berkeley honestly hoped, by his labor, to reconcile the philosophers and common people in a united admission of Divine truth. Strauss leaves the field with a proud complacency in having, as he supposes, set on foot a perpetual war between philosophy and common sense, between the theologian and the humble believer. Berkeley firmly believed in a God and a Christ objective to human thought. Strauss never admitted the existence of Deity as separate from the thinking, and the thinking power of men, except that he was allowed to inhere in all natural objects as a principle. Berkeley lived and died a good man. The life of Strauss, whatever may be his death, is most suspicious. If Berkeley with his virtues could not recommend his idealism, certainly Strauss may vainly hope to do so with his vices. The style of Strauss is classical; his reading in the department of Biblical criticism, and not in general science and history, has been extensive and thorough. Never was so much ability and so much cunning combined in any critical author.

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## ART. II.—MACAULAY'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

*The History of England, from the Accession of James II.* By THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY. New York: Harpers. 8vo. Vols. I. and II., 1849: Vols. III and IV., 1856.

IN attempting, at this late day, a formal examination of a work that has been subjected to so much criticism as Mr. Macaulay's History, we labor under the disadvantage of having to choose between the risk of repeating what has been uttered by others, and that of passing by material questions through fear of such repetition. But the first two volumes were only a fragment, even of the history of the English Revolution. For the fortunes of the revolutionary government, and of the men most active in its establishment, though not necessarily included in the narrative of that great event, are yet material to a proper judgment of it; and the manner in which the historian treats them in the progress of his work, sheds light on the usage they had previously received at his hands. We have, therefore, forborne to do more than announce the publication of these volumes,\* at the hazard of taking up the subject at a time when the public might have comparatively lost their interest in it. But the delay has at least enabled us more perfectly to satisfy ourselves upon some questions suggested by reading the work, and, we would hope, more perfectly to satisfy such of our readers as are disposed to review a subject on which they may have already bestowed much attention.

If the historian proposed to himself no higher end than to dazzle and delight contemporary readers, criticism would be unnecessary at any time, and doubly superfluous now. The verdict on that issue is already secured. The great popularity of the first two volumes is outrun by that of the two that have just succeeded them. But we cannot err in believing that Mr. Macaulay's ambition is higher and better.

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\* Christian Review, Vol. XIV., p. 210, and Vol. XXI., p. 310.



He aims to speak in a voice that shall reach future ages. In trying his title to the homage of generations to come, we must descend below the qualities of style and manner which have so much to do with the awakening of present admiration, and inquire how far he conforms to the inflexible standard of veracity and justice, by which historical fame must be tested. Not that the externals of historical composition are unimportant. A history, equally with a tragedy or an epic, is a work of art, and an object of criticism as such. But the architectural grace of a structure has little to do with its use or durability. History, to be read, must, indeed, give pleasure in the reading. If, however, readers are permanently attracted to a production that is insincere, or radically defective in substance, art becomes the occasion of evil, great in proportion to its own excellence.

Some qualities of a great writer in almost any department of composition,—some of special value in an historian,—are conceded to Mr. Macaulay by common consent. His general force of intellect and varied accomplishments, his rare powers of analysis and combination, of narrative and description, his consummate critical skill, and his vast stores of learning—resources gathered with diligence and thoroughly at command—are confessed by all. Historical studies have evidently been a favorite pursuit. He did not enter upon a history of England till he had much pondered the annals of ancient and modern Europe, and made himself familiar with the great masters of historic art. He has had a practical acquaintance with civil policy, beyond the reach of the mere scholar, and of more worth than mere erudition. His insight into human character and motives, so acquired, has been quickened and strengthened by much well-directed study of literature and art, of philosophy, law, and religion. We do not imagine, indeed, that he is profoundly versed in all these studies. No one person could be. But it would be difficult, we apprehend, to find another man better instructed in any department of learning to which he is not professionally devoted. Entering upon his task with such preparation, in the full maturity of his fine powers, he could not fail to produce a work fitted to challenge universal

and admiring attention. His success, to that extent, is notorious. He has enchanted scholars and statesmen, and has beaten the novelists within the precincts of the circulating library. In his person international "copywrong" has been made illustrious.

Yet it cannot be denied that much scepticism prevails in regard to the durability and value of his success. There is a marked contrast, in this country especially, between the popular judgment and that of professional critics. Sundry commonplaces of depreciation have run through our higher periodicals, importing a lofty consciousness of superiority to vulgar admiration. One speaks with frigid dignity of "a work called a History of England," and another wisely predicts what history will be in the ascendant when "the mob of novel-readers" shall have deserted Mr. Macaulay for some new favorite. Apart from the ancient prejudice which suspects every writer of trifling who is not somewhat tiresome, and the later foppery, which argues an author's profundity from his obscurity or paradoxical hardihood, there are some special occasions for so damaging an estimate.

One circumstance which is a source of power—political experience—is also a source of weakness. It occasions distrust. Party animosities and suspicions are easily aroused; and those who are not consciously affected by them may suspect their existence in the historian, whom he identifies with the politician, or in many of the readers whose applause he now wins. But before venturing to predict his future neglect from this cause, it is well to consider that time, which dims, sometimes also brightens fame. The fortune of an author, in this department of composition especially, may depend much upon whether he is in the line of human progress or of reaction. Prejudice on this score, moreover, can hardly outweigh the substantial advantages secured by public life. No man can worthily write the history of a great nation without some familiarity with affairs. The mere scholar, unskilled in civil and diplomatic transactions, laboriously as he may search among the archives of State, will be in danger of missing some of the most important materials for a sound judgment of men and events. His uninstructed eye is liable

to be distracted by the cross-lights of faction and diplomacy. Events which are to him anomalous, a statesman-like mind refers as by intuition to their proper causes. The one sees confusion where the other traces a natural and inevitable sequence. There is all the difference between the two which distinguishes the reader of books from the reader of both books and men.

Another obstacle to the cordial reception of the history, a victory over which, if achieved, will be, alone, proof of transcendent merit, is inherent in the nature of the subject. It involves the history of a struggle between principles that, in one form or another, are still living and in conflict on either side of the Atlantic,—between parties in politics and religion whose successors and representatives now struggle on a wider and still widening field. The historian who deals with such a theme can no more win the approbation of partisans on both sides than one man can serve two masters. He can be impartial, if at all, only by an indifference more distasteful than partiality, and far more fatal to success.

Absolute impartiality, indeed, is unattainable by the modern historian whose theme is his own country. In treating of institutions and events foreign to all present interests, he may preserve entire indifference. No sect or party will stand or fall by the result of inquiries into Grecian or Roman antiquities. No one's prepossessions are greatly shocked by whatever view of the Assyrian empire or the succession of caliphs. But the American historian who attempts to narrate the events of Washington's administration, the English historian who meddles with the Reformation or the Civil Wars, the French historian who reviews the Revolution, the Empire, or the Restoration, each feels in himself and stirs in others vibrations of sympathy or antipathy, which sensibly modulate the narrative, if they do not modify the historical judgment. Nor, if it were possible, would we have it otherwise. Without a vital sympathy with his theme, the historian would have but a wearisome and unprofitable task. His work would be just the "old almanack" it was pronounced by Sir Robert Walpole. History has no value, except as it exhibits the living demonstra-



tion of those principles which are the animating soul of all human action and reaction. The man who has no fixed principles of government is unfit for this work; he who has, must view characters and events in their relations to principles.

Now, taking it for granted that Mr. Macaulay must needs have some opinions on government, which cannot but affect his judgment concerning the events he has undertaken to narrate, the most that can be asked of him is, that he shall be candid enough so far to disclose them that every sensible reader can perceive and allow for the bias; and that he shall exercise sufficient control over his feelings to ensure that historic verity be not sacrificed to party prejudice. And, surely, if any one is in doubt as to what are his political principles, it is no fault of his. They have been disclosed in a variety of forms, with a clearness and emphasis peculiarly his own. They stand out on his pages with statuesque severity of outline, and with living expression. That he is no friend of despotism or of intolerance in Church or State, we have abundant evidence. That he recognizes in the State rights and powers antecedent and superior to those of any order or succession of persons, and that he refuses to recognize in government any higher dignity than to serve as an agency for the beneficent exercise of the powers, in order to maintain the rights of society, we need no better voucher than himself to assure us. We may be certain, in advance, that when he deals with men or with transactions running counter to these ideas, his judgment of them will be unfavorable. We may know beforehand what class of statesmen he will deem worthy of most abundant honor, and for what reason. Concealment, duplicity, looking one way and rowing another, cannot be laid to his charge.

Is this a bias that is likely to damage his credibility? Not very seriously, we apprehend, at least in this country, where he probably has more readers than in his own. We are aware that there is extant in American society a spirit of ultra-conservatism which plays strange pranks. It has been remarked—we know not with how much justice—that colonial toryism is more intolerant than the imperial. The *blues*

of Nova Scotia shame the paler colors of Buckinghamshire. Some of our American conservatives, when they fall athwart English questions, do it after a very provincial fashion. Blackwood's Magazine, which ought to be orthodoxly Tory, confessed a few years ago that the theory which represents Oliver Cromwell as a hypocrite, profiting by the fanaticism which he only shammed, must be given up. But the calumnious imputation survives in its pristine vigor on this side the Atlantic, and regularly reappears in certain quarters, whenever the Great-heart of English Puritanism is alluded to. It is not a great while since we heard a venerable prelate of the Episcopal church in this country, at a time when some of the sturdiest champions of State connexion in the Anglican Church were beginning to repent of Erastianism, congratulating his brethren of the lawn in England on the merciful preservation of their church establishment. Some of our "jurists of the old school" contended for the crudest and most cumbrous anomalies of common law procedure against the movement for law reform, with a superstition worthy at once of a fanatical devotee and an antiquarian pedant. But such morbid notions cannot predominate over the good sense of any large portion of the American people. Those who cherish them may be dissatisfied with the historian whose sympathies are openly with the defenders of civil and religious liberty. Their censure will do him no harm.

Even those who may not entirely relish his tone on these subjects, if they are men of ordinary candor, will at least honor his frankness. He makes no attempt to pass for what he is not. In this respect he is a total contrast to Hume. With many edifying comments on the ancient excesses of tyranny, and affected professions of regard for the "happy constitution" of England, Hume set himself by every artifice to apologize for the bitterest enemies of public liberty, not scrupling to falsify the annals of centuries. He began with the Stuarts. His attempted vindication of them was coldly and incredulously received. He then took up the reigns of the Tudors. That Charles the First might be absolved from the charge of an unconstitutional policy, he undertook to frame a history that should wink out of sight the existence

of constitutional restraints. On finishing that part of the history, he said exultingly to Robertson :

You will see what light and force this history of the Tudors bestows on that of the Stuarts. Had I been wise I should have begun with it. I care not to boast ; but I will venture to say that I have now effectually stopped the mouths of all those villanous Whigs who railed at me.

The Whigs' mouths were not stopped, and he made thorough work, beginning with the Roman conquest, and seeking premises to sustain his conclusion in the reigns of the Plantagenets. The spirit in which he wrote his history guided him in his successive revisions. He writes,—

I am now [1770] running over again the last edition of my history, in order to correct it still further. I either soften or expunge many villanous seditious Whig strokes which had crept into it. . . . The first editions were too full of those foolish English prejudices, which all nations and all ages disavow.

Yet all this odious partisanship and pride of opinion are concealed under such a winning air of simplicity and fairness, that no common reader would suspect their existence. It is surely a fortunate circumstance that no one need be at a loss to discover Mr. Macaulay's political principles.

We here refer not so much to the expositions put forth in his essays, which had given him so brilliant a reputation preluding the popularity of his history, but to the history itself. In his lucid analysis of the original constitution of England, and his account of the struggle which the Revolution terminated, we see the distinct outline of a political creed which may be denied or anathematized, but can hardly be misconstrued,—definite enough to assign his point of view, but catholic enough to impose no slavish allegiance to men or parties. And if some party-spirit should be chargeable upon him, we are unable to account for the fact that his party tendencies are so much more sensitively detected and harshly judged by Americans than those of Tory historians. Whig party-spirit is doubtless bad, but it is no worse than Tory party-spirit. Yet while most of our critics have praised Hume on the score of his "philosophic" character, while the conservative Lord Mahon has been patronized, while even so narrow a Tory as Southey has his admirers, there is



incessant vigilance to detect the "prejudices" of men like Mackintosh, Hallam and Macaulay. True, English Whigs are not republicans. They do not agree with us in respect to the means best fitted to secure civil liberty. But of the value and excellence of the end, they have no more question than we have, and it is no honor to American criticism that it has been so prone to chime in with the clamor of Tory partisans.

As to those essays, by which the historian was so auspiciously introduced to the public, they must have proved an embarrassment rather than an advantage to him. We shall not be thought unduly to decry our own craft, when we say that periodical publication brings a good deal of unripe fruit into the literary market, and we needed not his own confession, to certify that Mr. Macaulay has vended his share of it. It is no slight test of magnanimity, to find oneself committed by the public utterance of historical judgments that have failed to stand the test of maturer study. Not that we esteem his latest judgment in all cases to be the truest. On some points we would be loth to surrender ground, our possession of which has been so gallantly defended by his stout hand and dazzling steel. Beliefs held more by a kind of instinct than by any satisfying reasons, have been vindicated for us by his logic and quickened by his breathing thoughts. He may have seen cause to let them go, but he must show cause before we follow the precedent. The essays are indeed a curious study, permitting us to trace the progress of his mind through the problems of which his history gives us the solution. We see him in 1825, as the eulogist of Milton, and in 1828, as the critic of Hallam, almost Comwellian enough to rejoice the heart of hero-worshipping Carlyle. In 1831, when Hampden's irreparable loss is the theme of his eloquence, we can discern the glimpses of a moderated reverence for the Protector. In 1835, reviewing Mackintosh's fragment of a history, which if it had been completed, might have restrained him from attempting another, he recurs indeed with something of the old fire to Cromwell's energetic foreign policy, but Roundhead politics in general have evidently taken leave of him.

In 1825, the Revolution is apparently most esteemed as a justification of the Great Rebellion, and a comparison is drawn between the actors in the two, not at all to the advantage of the men of 1688. In 1828, he scoffs at the Revolution and all concerned in it, with a bitterness that is almost atoned for by its brilliant effect, and which, but for the family likeness discernible in the rhetoric, would suggest to the student of his history, some doubts in regard of his personal identity. A few brief quotations from these essays will excite a smile, if they do not teach a deeper lesson. We read in the second chapter of the history :

It has been too much the practice of writers zealous for freedom to represent the Restoration as a disastrous event, and to condemn the folly or baseness of that Convention which recalled the royal family without exacting new securities against mal-administration. Those who hold this language, do not comprehend the real nature of the crisis, &c.

Now hear the essayist of 1825 :

The Presbyterians, in their eagerness to be revenged on the Independents, sacrificed their own liberty, and deserted all their old principles. Without casting one glance on the past, or requiring one stipulation for the future, they threw down their freedom at the feet of the most frivolous and heartless of tyrants.

And the same critic, in 1828, in much the same strain, saith of Cromwell :

He went down to his grave in the fulness of power and fame ; and left to his son an authority which any man of ordinary firmness and prudence would have retained. But for the weakness of that foolish Ishbosheth, the opinions which we have been expressing would, we believe, now have formed the orthodox creed of Good Englishmen. We might now be writing under the government of his Highness Oliver the Fifth, or Richard the Fourth, Protector, by the Grace of God, of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland, and the dominions thereto belonging.

When we read in this essay of "those monstrous fictions respecting the birth of the Prince of Wales, which persons of the highest rank were not ashamed to circulate," we hardly recognize the historian who half excuses the public incredulity on that matter, by the reckless perverseness of James. The essayist deals summary justice on the daughters of James, for their sacrifice of "natural affection." The historian very fairly acquits Anne, and upon the whole commends Mary, for their "unnatural" conduct. No reader of the

history will soon forget the eloquent recital of honors inherited by De Vere, Earl of Oxford, as that nobleman is first introduced, or the elaborate portraiture of Halifax, who seems to be a favorite with the author. It may give an unpleasant shock to look back to the sentence passed in 1828, and find that not only Churchill bore up under "mountains of infamy," but that "Godolphin, *Oxford*, Danby, *the trimmer Halifax*, the renegade Sunderland, were all men of the same class." The characters of Danby and Halifax, in later essays, are gradually bleached to the comparative whiteness they assume to the eye of readers of the history.

In 1828, Mr. Macaulay deemed the Revolution, now the object of studied eulogy, a transaction "in almost every part discreditable to England."

"That a tyrant," he continues, "who had violated the fundamental laws of the country, who had attacked the rights of its greatest corporations, who had begun to persecute the established religion of the State, who had never respected the law, either in his superstition or in his revenge, could not be pulled down without the aid of a foreign army, is a circumstance not very grateful to our national pride. Yet this is the least degrading part of the story. The shameless insincerity, the warm assurances of general support which James received down to the moment of general desertion, indicate a meanness of spirit and a looseness of morality most disgraceful to the age."

In 1831 (Essay on Hampden,) he denies that "the honor" of England was "compromised" by the Dutch invasion of 1688; and the reader of his history cannot have failed to notice how carefully he details the successive steps by which the loyal clergy and gentry were alienated from their allegiance, and how rapidly the progress of the general desertion is described, with a picturesque animation, which compels one to forget the "shameless insincerity" of the actors, in the interest of the catastrophe or in admiration of the artist. But perhaps the most remarkable contrast remains to be noted. No passage in the history, of equal length, exceeds in interest the narrative of the trial of the seven Bishops. The author lavishes upon it all his resources of descriptive, declamatory and dramatic effect. After having been fired by this splendid passage, the figure of a cold shower-bath is a tame representation of the effect produced by the Macaulay of 1828, who says,—



The part which the Church played was not equally atrocious; but it must have been exquisitely diverting to a scoffer. Never were principles so loudly professed, and so flagrantly abandoned. The royal prerogative had been magnified to the skies in theological works; the doctrine of passive obedience had been preached from innumerable pulpits. The University of Oxford had sentenced the works of the most moderate constitutionalists to the flames. The accession of a Catholic king, the frightful cruelties committed in the West of England, never shook the steady loyalty of the clergy. But did they serve the king for naught? He laid his hand on them, and they cursed him to his face. He touched the revenue of a college and the liberty of some prelates, and the whole profession set up a yell worthy of Hugh Peters himself. Oxford sent its plate to an invader with more alacrity than she had shown when Charles the First requested it. Nothing was said about the wickedness of resistance till resistance had done its work, till the anointed vicegerent of heaven had been driven away, and it had become plain that he would never be restored, or would be restored at least under strict limitations. The clergy went back, it must be owned, to their old theory, as soon as they found that it would do them no harm.

These contrasts, violent as they seem at first view, are not discreditable. They are all of one kind, indicating in connexion with intermediate essays, a steady but very gradual transition from extreme to more moderate, and in some cases opposite opinions. They show us a strong mind working diligently on the materials within reach, a little too bold and confident at first, and prematurely communicating its judgments to the public; but also, we cannot help thinking, a frank and manly mind, not too conceited to learn, nor too proud to retract. We see the same qualities in his history,—in his ready allowance of the virtues, while he unsparingly exposes the absurd principles of the mass of Tory churchmen of the era, and in his decided condemnation of the deplorable errors of the Whigs, whose principles he as clearly espouses. We feel a degree of assurance that, where he errs, it is no wilful deviation.

This being allowed, a strong presumption is at once raised for the substantial accuracy of his work. It is impossible to doubt his wealth in the materials of history, or his ability to use them with just effect; and if he aims sincerely to make a truthful picture, it may be quite safe to conclude that he has succeeded as completely as is consistent with human fallibility. Is this presumption warranted by the result? For obvious reasons we shall not attempt a direct answer to this inquiry, which would involve an assumption

of superiority over the historian in that wherein his preëminence is undisputed. But there are means of arriving at a satisfactory opinion, the grounds of which shall be briefly stated.

It was unavoidable, as we have seen, that the work should give offence in some quarters, nor were the aggrieved parties likely to submit in silence. Attempts have accordingly been made to shake its credit, some with such plausibility as to produce a decided effect on a portion of the public. But in most cases they have done more to show the *animus* of his critics than to injure the historian. Very much that has been alleged, has respect to opinions rather than to assertions of fact. To a certain class of critics, for example, the views which are given of the Reformation and of the Civil Wars, are very offensive. Of the treatment of ecclesiastical questions we shall have something further to say; but for the present it is sufficient to observe that mere errors of opinion have little to do with historical accuracy. If it were otherwise, how could men who are so wounded by what seems in Mr. Macaulay a want of respect for the English Church, for Cranmer, or for Charles the First, forgive so readily Hume's open contempt for the Reformation and for all religious earnestness? The truth is, that the first three chapters, the quarry from which a large part of the materials for censure have been dug, constitute but the introduction to the main history. The accession of James II. having been selected as the era from which the narrative was to proceed, it was necessary to a just understanding with the reader that the condition of the three kingdoms at that point of time should be clearly exhibited. But the issues of centuries are not to be comprehended within a few rounded periods. Mr. Macaulay did wisely, therefore, in pausing to sweep the track of past history with a rapid penetrating glance, and to note the most prominent land-marks. He was to show what the nation had become, by exhibiting the various ethnical, social and religious influences which made it what it was. These influences are accurately enumerated, if they are not always justly estimated. Their relative force, the degree in which they severally contributed to the result, would hardly

be judged alike by any two men; and it is too much to ask that a review so brief as to exclude all detail, and admitting only the most general argumentative statements, should satisfy everybody. It is true, as a matter of fact, that the Reformation in England was greatly modified by political causes; that it issued in a church which gave almost equal offence to Romanists and extreme Protestants; and that by natural consequence, within this politico-ecclesiastical "comprehension," though hidden for a time, there germinated the seeds of high and low church dissension and of ultimate dissent. The position of parties in the reign of James II., cannot be understood without a distinct apprehension of these questions. But whether entire justice is done to the character of the Reformers, of leading high-churchmen, or of the Puritans, is a question no answer to which seriously affects the trustworthiness of the narrative. On some of these points we shall have occasion to express our dissent from the historian's judgment, but we despair of seeing a history written by a man who thinks for himself, and who at the same time thinks exactly as we do on every subject he touches.

Another class of critics find their feelings shocked by pictures which derange some of their most cherished associations. These seem too bad to be true, and it is assumed that the colors have been laid on by a prejudiced artist. Such, for example, are the representations of the country squire and country parson, in the famous third chapter. The propriety, in a literary point of view, of inserting in a history such confessedly ideal pictures, may be doubted. The absurdity of criticising them as one would the description of the death of Charles II., or of the battle of the Boyne, is equally clear. But their substantial fidelity is after all too well established to be successfully assailed. The novelists of a succeeding generation, whose popularity attests their truth to life and nature, reproduce Mr. Macaulay's squire in life size and full dress. He is as familiarly known to thousands as their next-door neighbors. As to his parson, the poverty and social degradation of the parochial clergy in the reigns of the Stuarts ought to be well known. One need not explore the Bodleian Library or the British Museum to verify the tale.



Izaak Walton tells us that when George Herbert declared his intention to become a parish priest, he was dissuaded from it as too mean an employment, and too much below his birth, and the excellent abilities and endowments of his mind.

To this he replied:

Though the iniquity of the late times have made clergymen meanly valued, and the sacred name of priest contemptible; yet I will labor to make it honorable, by consecrating all my learning and all my poor abilities to advance the glory of that God that gave them.

Burton, the Anatomist of Melancholy, himself a clergyman, says in words that might almost seem to have suggested some expressions of Mr. Macaulay:

Many poor country vicars, for want of other means, are driven to their shifts; to turn mountebanks, quacksalvers, empirics; and if our greedy patrons hold us to such hard conditions, *as commonly they do*, they will make most of us work at some trade, as Paul did, at last turn taskers, maltsters, costermongers, graziers, sell ale as some have done, or worse.

This, making proper allowance for Burton's fantastic exaggeration, was the state of things before the Civil Wars. After that deluge—specially fatal to the church—had swept over the whole land, the postdiluvian chaplain may surely be described as a butt, a groom, or an errand-runner, and the postdiluvian rector as by turns a gardener or carter, without seriously perilling one's credit for truth.

When we pass from these introductory chapters into the main body of the history, almost the only serious trespass alleged is upon the fame of William Penn. If so much indignation had not been aroused by Mr. Macaulay's reduction of the Quaker hero into a man having some high titles to admiration, but, on the whole, of moderate intellect, of slight perspicacity, and with some very evident weaknesses, we should be tempted to say that the historian was seduced by his love for the picturesque into making more of Penn than he desires. Hume and Hallam, we believe, manage to get through their histories of the Revolution without once naming the founder of Pennsylvania. Mr. Macaulay would have been more easily forgiven if he had been equally abstinent, instead of daring the assertion that Penn was not a great man. Those short sentences—

His writings and his life furnish abundant proofs that he was not a man of strong sense. He had no skill in reading the characters of others —

have hurt worse than any specific accusations, and have instigated Mr. W. H. Dixon to write a new Life of Penn with the express intent of magnifying him into greatness. If garnishing every incident with laudatory phrases and rounding it off with a set panegyric—if a readiness to claim for all his hero's political opinions the credit not only of sincerity but of absolute truth—could avail to prove anything but his own weakness, Mr. Dixon would have no difficulty in making out his case. To win the gratitude of posterity, however, it is not enough to prove that, on a great question, Penn was more enlightened than many of his contemporaries: it must appear that posterity is in some eminent sense indebted to him for the recognition of the principle. If he had first discovered the truth as to the rights of conscience, this would be enough. But, as he lived too late for that, though his adhesion to it against reproach and persecution was meritorious, it is asking too much to require us to call it, as Mr. Dixon does, "his" principle, unless he bore a distinguished part in achieving the victory over intolerance. Did, then, the efforts of Penn hasten the emancipation of conscience, or were they wisely directed to that end? We see no proof that his contemporaries were affected for good by them; and, although Mr. Dixon tells us of books that "ought to be familiar to every Englishman," the phrase very intelligibly suggests that the generations following have been equally unconscious of their power. The wisdom of his movements will sufficiently appear by enumerating the most important.

He argued before the judges and maintained in print, that the liberties guaranteed by Magna Charta are by that instrument set above all subsequent legislation, and that statutes infringing them are constitutionally void. This was, in effect, to ascribe to a royal declaration defining the prerogatives of the crown—which is all that the Great Charter professes to be—an authority paramount to that of the whole legislature; a manifest absurdity, of which no Englishman "of strong sense" could be guilty, and in theory, at least, an exaltation of the prerogative that would seem to have been ingeniously

devised to alienate him as far as possible from all lovers of liberty in the kingdom, who for two generations defended the privileges of parliament as the grand security of freedom. A written constitution superior to ordinary legislation every American is taught to regard as a great blessing; though ours has become so ductile through the license of congressional and judicial interpretation, that John Quincy Adams was not far wrong when he exclaimed, "*The Constitution of the United States—stet magna nominis umbra!*" But Magna Charta is not such a constitution as every sensible man, acquainted with the fundamental maxims of the British government, well knows. It limits the royal power. As to the force of an act of parliament, the legal "omnipotence" of the legislature is a part of the alphabet of English law.

The honor is also claimed for Penn of having procured, in the decision of the famous Bushel case, a judicial recognition of the invaluable right of a jury knowingly to bring in a verdict contrary to the law. We are aware that this *is* a high honor in the estimation of a great many people, who forget that the power to nullify a law for a good purpose may be exerted with equal facility for a bad one, as scores of judicial murders recorded in the State trials bear witness. The security of public liberty, we submit, is not to be found in the arbitrary discretion of jurors or of any other men, but in the impartial execution of just laws, sustained by a healthful public opinion. Good or ill, however, the right in question had been acknowledged in previous decisions. There is no proof that Penn's arguments produced any effect but that of irritating the court.

With the attempt of James II., by one sweeping act of prerogative, to abrogate the whole series of penal and disqualifying statutes against dissenters, Penn had an opportunity to demonstrate in a conspicuous manner the calibre of his mind and the range of his vision. On the one side was the arbitrary indulgence of the monarch, on the other was the prospect of a toleration with the guarantees of law. The success of the king's policy would be the annihilation of all civil and religious liberty. It offered unfettered worship, but on terms which, if accepted by the nation, left the king an absolute



sovereign, at liberty to withdraw the indulgence at any moment and resume persecution. Penn sided with the king, clung to his cause in spite of his most violent infractions of law, and after his deposition plotted to restore him. Mr. Dixon assures us that Penn believed James "to be sincere when he declared himself opposed to every kind of religious tests," and we are further informed that Mr. Dixon has the same faith. Now it is a matter of historical notoriety that James had urged forward cruel persecutions in Scotland; that he volunteered a promise, on his accession to the throne, to maintain and execute the intolerant laws for the defence of the Church of England; and that, after calling for a national contribution to relieve the exiled Huguenots, he issued an order refusing the benefit of it to all who would not conform to the established church. Even while making those professions which won the confidence of Penn (and of Penn's zealous biographer), he dismissed Rochester from the Treasury because he would not apostatize to Rome, and Sunderland kept his place in the ministry only by doing what Rochester recoiled from. Penn's insight into the character of others must have been based on some other principle than that which judges a tree by its fruit. The king manifestly wished to be rid of the legal test, in order that he might be free to make one of his own.\*

But, whether a great man or a little, Penn is entitled to fair and truthful dealing, and Mr. Macaulay is taxed with a very different style of narrative. Not to be too tedious, we may pass the questions, whether he advised Kiffin to become an alderman, whether he had a taste for seeing executions, and other trivialities that have figured in wordy war. The historian is indignantly censured for saying that Penn was looked upon with coldness by his own sect, in consequence of his court life. Mr. Dixon shall refute himself. He says (probably when he was not thinking of any antagonist):

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\* It is said that Penn perceived and pointed out the insufficiency of the royal indulgence, and advised the procuring of an act of parliament. But he adhered to the court party after the king had rejected his advice, and required of his supporters a recognition of his dispensing power. His advice in the closet is no plea to defend his public course.

Many of his own sect, for a time, looked coldly on him. . . . They had no complaint to make against his morals or his life; they only pretended to condemn the too active part he had taken in the affairs of the world.

Another grievance is, that Mr. Macaulay charges Penn with acting as a broker for the ladies of the court in extorting money for the pardon of the "maids of Taunton"—a company of children barbarously persecuted as accomplices in Monmouth's insurrection, merely for having been marched by their schoolmistress in a procession. It has been proved that there was a George Penne concerned in the sale of pardons to some other Taunton prisoners. It is inferred that he must be the "Mr. Penne" addressed in a letter from Sunderland, which is one of the proofs adduced against William Penn. Both the charge and the refutation seem to rest on inferences that are too frail to justify much positiveness of assertion, and we think that therein the historian may have erred.

One other point has been contested at great length—the conduct of Penn towards the Fellows of Magdalene College, Oxford. But, after attentively reading the statements and counter-statements—stripping them of epithets and inferences—we cannot discover any material difference to dispute about. The essential facts are related very nearly in the same terms on both sides. Not to enter into details, for which the reader is referred to the history, a very general statement is sufficient for our present purpose. James nominated to the presidency of the college a Roman Catholic, who was proved to be a man of abandoned character, and who was disqualified by the statutes of the founder and by the law of the land. The Fellows remonstrated, and on the last day allowed for the election chose Dr. John Hough. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners annulled the election. Parker, Bishop of Oxford, also disqualified for the office, was then nominated by the king. But the Fellows denied the authority of the Ecclesiastical Commission, and adhered to their first election as legally complete. That they were in the right, and the king flagrantly in the wrong, no one doubts. But their position was perilous. The king was obstinate, the Ecclesiastical Commission, a potent engine

of tyranny, waited for its victims, and the consequences of braving it would be serious.

At this crisis Penn interposed. James was making a tour through that part of the kingdom, and the courtly Quaker joined the royal train. The king turned aside to Oxford, to try the effect of his personal authority with the Fellows, but was unable to awe them into compliance. Mr. Macaulay says that "the agency of Penn was employed." This is earnestly denied. It seems very clear that he acted in the king's interest, and advised the Fellows to yield; and if it will help his credit to say that he volunteered this service, we cheerfully grant it. Again, the history asserts, and the biography denies, that he endeavored to intimidate the Fellows into some compliance, by representing that "ruin impended over the society." It is only a question of words. Mr. Dixon says that Penn feared the quarrel would

lead to a loss of the college charter, and a transfer of its immense revenue to the Papists, and he interposed his good offices to heal the wounds

A loss of the charter, we should think, would come pretty nearly to the same thing as "ruin." The "wound" could be "healed" only by concession. Penn is said by his defender to have been alarmed at "the combined obstinacy of the king and the Fellows;" and his healing proposals to the Fellows must have logically embodied advice to yield in some point. But, it is objected, Penn disapproved of the king's proceedings. So says the historian. Proof is also furnished that on conference with the Fellows they showed that concession on their part was impossible. So the history states. When, however, we are reminded of a certain "manly English letter" which Penn wrote to the king on their behalf, we must doubt its title to such laudatory epithets. It does not appear that he had manliness enough to claim for the college its legal rights. He pleads the conscientious scruples of the Fellows, representing to the king that,

in their circumstances, they could not yield without a breach of their oaths, and that such mandates were a force on conscience, and not agreeable to *the king's other gracious indulgences.*



To solicit the king's "gracious indulgence" for their distressed consciences was a different sort of manliness from that of Hough and his fellow-collegians. A second interview was had by him with a deputation from the college. It appears that in this conversation he held language not very consistent with his former sense of danger. The deputation said that the whole university was in peril. The Papists had got Christ Church and University College; the contest was now for Magdalene. Penn thought the Papists would be content with what they had got, and would not be likely to grasp anything more! Or, to take Mr. Dixon's version of it—

The Catholics had got two colleges. To them he did not dispute their right;\* but he could confide in their prudence. Honest men would defend their just claims; but should they ask from the royal favor what was not their due, they would forfeit all they had acquired. He felt sure they would not be so senseless.

To say nothing of the folly of all this, it is plain that such talk could have but one intent—to persuade the Fellows that submission would do them less harm than they feared. Great stress is laid on the testimony of Hough, that Penn "did not so much as offer any proposal by way of accommodation." No *proposal*, we grant; he found too evidently that it was useless. All that Mr. Macaulay asserts is, that he *hinted* at a compromise. One of the hints was that Hough might become Bishop of Oxford,—purchase the Episcopate, that is, by yielding in a matter where he was sworn to fidelity. To this, no better defence is offered than that it was a mere jest. We are told with emphasis that he said it "*smiling*." But we are so dull as not to see the point of the joke. If it was not meant to intimate that Dr. Hough would gain something by a compromise, it was stark nonsense. To call it "innocent mirth" is wretched trifling. Dr. Hough says:

I perceived he had a mind to droll upon us, but I told him seriously I had no ambition.

He was in no humor for joking.

The truth is that Mr. Macaulay nowhere represents Penn as concurring in the king's ultimate designs or sharing his

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\* As if the perversion of those two colleges was not every way as illegal as the attack on Magdalene!

spirit. He does not charge him with any hostility to the college, but only with that short-sighted partiality to the king's ostensible policy which blinded him to the real importance of the struggle in which the Fellows were engaged, and made him insensible to the unseemliness of concession by even a hair's breadth.

He does not, deeply as he censures the baseness of the hint about the bishopric, charge Penn with a *consciousness* of the bad import of the words he used. He accuses him not of depravity, but of narrowness of mind and weakness of judgment. He had a large philanthropic heart, and his title to veneration as the founder of Pennsylvania, where his best qualities had a noble field for action, are undisputed. But it is alleged, and we think proved, that as an English politician he made a sorry figure.

We have dwelt upon this point because it is held, on this side the water, as the chief vulnerable part of the history. When everything else fails, it is deemed to be an all-sufficient condemnation, that "Macaulay defames William Penn." As we have intimated, on one point his judgment appears to be rash, so far as the evidence is apparent. Perhaps there is sometimes an undue severity of tone. But there is far less question of the facts than one would imagine from the confident style in which the history is often censured.

It requires much military science and skill to judge by inspection of the strength of a fortress, but very ordinary minds may draw just inferences from the success or failure of repeated attacks. While we might shrink from presuming to sit in judgment on a historian so richly furnished with the information required for his work, it is much easier to observe the fate of hostile critics, and from that to determine the strength of the work assailed. This we have done, and out of many have given a few examples of failure. Six years of free criticism upon the first two volumes have scarcely abraded in any sensible degree the solid fabric. There has been abundant complaint of the author's *opinions* touching the Church of England, the Puritans, the Stuarts, King William, and other persons and things; but the accuracy of his narrative has been impeached with very slender

success. The like process has been commenced upon the new volumes, and, so far as we have seen, whenever the censors pass from vague and sweeping animadversion to particular charges, their ill-success is equally striking. A few plausible, but minute, points of exception have been made, but, as a whole, we believe the volumes stand fire remarkably well; while in style and absorbing interest they worthily rank with their predecessors.

It is possible, however, to tell the literal truth so as to convey an impression totally false. The historian may be immaculate in his facts, even to the smallest details, and yet his work may be as worthless as a novel. A portrait may exhibit the features of the original in such lights and shades as to produce a strange expression. It is in the perspective and coloring of a history that falsehood is oftenest hid, if the artistic power of the author is sufficient for success in the fraud, and he has the will to use it; or in the absence of fraud, if his skill is the servant of passion or prejudice that imposes upon himself. We have often seen it asserted that Mr. Macaulay's love of rhetorical effect gives an air of unreality to his delineations. His marvellous dramatic and descriptive powers are made to testify against the truth of his representations. Readers over whom he casts a fascinating spell, awake with a suspicion that something more intoxicating than truth has been imbibed. Nothing, we are convinced, could be more unreasonable. The age, whose annals are passed in review, was, *in fact*, one of unequalled excitement. The popular feeling of England was roused into a tempest. The fountains of the great deep were broken up. A civil war; the violent overthrow of throne and altar; repeated revolutions; a dynasty restored from no love to its representative, but from national weariness and exhaustion; reviving factions, fired by the most potent stimulants that can affect human nature; the love of power, the love of liberty, the sympathies and the aversions of religious faith; an assault at once upon the rights, the sentiments, and the pride of the nation, so desperate as to be almost incredible, so dangerous as to make a great people forget animosities that had raged even unto blood, and to unite them almost as



one man against the common enemy of their freedom and their faith—these are things that cannot be truly and at the same time coldly related. Any representation of them which should permit a human spectator to maintain perfect equanimity, would be more hatefully and prodigiously false than the most exaggerated romance.

But England, it may be said, was not in a perpetual effervescence from 1640 to the close of the century, yet the entire narrative is fired with the same restless interest. Not altogether the same. There is a powerful charm belonging to the history as a whole, diversified and seemingly superseded by the effect of particular parts, but yet ever present; and when an occasional stimulant loses its force, this still buoys and exhilarates. The movement of history is not that of a mere agitated sea, but of a profluent stream. It records the evolution of a vast scheme of Providence in which no act is without significance. The history of a particular State, aside from its relations to the race as a whole, has a subordinate unity with the same perfect correlation of parts. No mind less than omniscient can perfectly comprehend these relations. But it is possible in some degree to transcend the shifting views of ordinary sight, to look before and after, and by a wide generalization to detect the sequences of events. A writer who has done this with any success, invests the details of his work with a higher charm than is inherent in themselves. It is not exaggeration, it is not distortion, it is not fiction; it is a genuine intellectual inspiration that imparts to dead facts a true historic life. The reader feels himself so equably borne along on the current as at times to transfer the movement from himself to surrounding objects. But what he sees is none the less solid land.

That the history before us is true in this highest sense, cannot be positively asserted till it is complete. The author takes his stand upon the England of to-day, and reviews the process by which from its original barbarism it became what it is. We know that he regards it on the whole as a beneficial progress, auspicious of a better future. But what in his view are the elements and conditions of national well-being, does not so distinctly appear at present. His ideas of the

true polity of States are sufficiently distinct. But political institutions are only means. Their merely material benefits are at best subordinate ends. The life of a nation, like that of the individual man, consisteth not in the abundance of the things which it possesseth. The merits of Mr. Macaulay's political and social philosophy cannot now be determined, and should not be presumed. In a more confined sense, limiting our view to the means of national growth—regarding the existing social constitution of England as a fact which must be taken for a leading premiss in an argument whose conclusion is to be written in future ages—we think his estimate of this fact sufficiently accurate, and his conception of the agencies by which it has come to pass, mainly just.

A capital merit indeed, which distinguishes this from too many works called histories, is the distinct recognition of those moral and social impulses by which, more than by legislation or diplomacy, the course of events is determined. The antipathies of race, and those of a later date between the rural gentry and the court; the action and reaction of popular feeling, and the methods in which public sentiment found expression; the curious subdivisions of parties and the cross intrigues going on within them; the intermixture of private and personal with public motives; and especially the near relation which the civil and religious history of England bore to each other from the Reformation downwards, are not only indicated by formal statements, but traced in their operation at every stage of the narrative. The author's "philosophy of history" is evidently not a speculation which moulds his narrative into conformity with itself, but a philosophy resulting from an induction of the facts, reflecting back, and shedding upon them, a clear and pervading light.

Here, again, he has been assailed without stint. If he has not invented or perverted facts, men say, he has disposed and colored them under the influence of violent prejudices, party and personal. The charge would come with a better grace, if his critics did not give abundant proof that they are themselves under the same sort of influences. One reviewer, for example,\* brings forward as proof of party prejudice

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\* In the *London Times*.

the historian's severe judgment of Marlborough, and exclaims:

But then he secretly corresponded with St. Germain!—and so did his colleagues, with a very few exceptions. He talked of bringing over the army to James; but “the hypocrite,” when the time came, “evaded the demand.” Was he worse in this respect, was he more of a hypocrite than Russell, who made similar overtures, and in like manner evaded them?

The insinuation is that Russell, for his Whigism, is very leniently treated. The question has no point, if this is not its meaning. But what does the history say of Russell?

In truth, with undaunted courage, with considerable talents both for war and for administration, and with a certain public spirit which showed itself by glimpses even in the very worst parts of his life, he was emphatically a bad man, insolent, malignant, greedy, faithless.

If this is the language of partisan partiality, what, pray, would be the fit language of party enmity? And how impartial must be the spirit of a critic who can pretend that Marlborough did no worse than his colleagues, in the face of the plainly stated and almost superfluously proved facts of his sinuous career? The same writer enters into a forcible statement of the circumstances which constituted the temptation to such double dealing—William's precarious health, the disturbed state of opinion, the possibility that the next month or the next day might bring a counter-revolution. While reading this, the conduct of those traitors seems so natural, and in some sort excusable, that one wonders how the historian could have overlooked such obvious considerations—till a look at the seventeenth chapter discloses the fact that the critic has only a little expanded three compact sentences of the history. If “the play” were “worth the candle,” we might expose numerous instances of such disingenuousness.

That in England party or personal prejudice should give character to criticism, is nothing wonderful. But when we see in an American periodical signs of such malice, it is natural to ask with wonder, whom, on our shores, has Mr. Macaulay offended? What can be the provocation? A journal professing as its aim “to foster a noble nationality in literature and art”\* took up Macaulay with the modest intention of

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\* The *New York Quarterly*. See the number for January, 1855.



subjecting him to a power which he himself has never exhibited. We propose to consider his works analytically.

By way of illustrating his own analytical powers and his author's deficiency therein, the reviewer remarks that with a single exception,

We remember not one of Mr. Macaulay's nominal reviews in which he has ever quoted the author, or done more than merely cite his name at the beginning of the article.

Analysis depending on so defective a memory should call a little study to its aid. Depending on his precarious recollection, as it would seem, he offers in support of a violent tirade against the personal as well as literary character of the author, a series of the most impudent misstatements ever concentrated into an equal space. Such a production is not worth refuting; but it may be instructive to show how far the assurance of anonymous "criticism" can go. We have a long catalogue of alleged omissions. "He almost wholly glides over the . . . period of the English commonwealth." Strange! in a "History of England from the Accession of James II." But it is not quite so defective as we are asked to believe. "He might have recognized the great Protector's sagacity and decision"—and has he not? "He might have shown his historical lore by" telling some stuff about the deportment of Cromwell's soldiers when *attending mass* in Scotland! "He might have admitted"—has he denied?—"that the Protector's court was in every respect an example of domestic purity." "He might have admitted"—has he not told it in burning words, once and again?—"that instead of truckling to France he dictated to her, and overawed at once the Vatican and the Escorial." The strict discipline of Cromwell's army, their obedience to their general, their terrible-ness to the foe, and his skill as a commander, are among the things which this reckless literary bravo says are not acknowledged by the historian, though they are the theme of some of his most eloquent passages. With the same bad memory, which a fresh reading of the history would have corrected, the domestic virtues and gentlemanly manners of Charles I.—the fact that the Whigs "intrigued to drive (James) from power," and that their leaders were "in the pay of Louis XIV,"

—the undoubted legitimacy of the Pretender—the acquiescence of the Church party in arbitrary power when their own interests were safe from it—the sensibility shown by James when deserted by his daughter—and the privity of Mary and Anne to their father's deposition—are all included in the list of things omitted. Myriads of readers in generations yet future will learn these facts for the first time in the pages so foolishly maligned.

But we are weary, if our readers are not, of worrying such contemptible game as this. We set ourselves to the present task from no vanity of championship for Mr. Macaulay. He needs no such service from us. But if any who lack the opportunity to investigate for themselves, and have had their confidence in him shaken by the bold tone of depreciation on all sides, shall be re-assured of his title to respect as an honest, no less than brilliant and powerful historian, our labor will not have been lost. The influence of a history composed in a spirit of reverence for human rights and constitutional freedom, is too valuable to be recklessly impaired.

As already intimated, the work is less satisfactory in a religious, than in a political or literary point of view. In one respect it is a great improvement on some of its predecessors. It searches carefully for the moral causes of events. These are the grand motors of every society, though not always traceable with certainty. In modern, and especially in English history, they have signal preëminence.

And of all the forces that have operated in the progress of the English people, none can be compared for energy or constancy of action with Christianity. Religious principle is the strongest of human motives; and in England, owing to the peculiarities of her ecclesiastical constitution, it has modified or colored a large part of the civil transactions. Mr. Macaulay has assigned it the place it deserves. He recognizes the legitimacy of its dominion. Christianity appears in the march of history clothed with the insignia of her just precedence.

And yet, while the religious element is sought to be exhibited in its just *relief*, it is precisely here that the author seems to us least successful. In truth there is something

enigmatical in his treatment of this subject, in all his writings. He is far from grudging to Christianity due credit for its power, or for its beneficent tendencies. He is at no loss to detect philosophical or theological distinctions; yet no one, from his writings alone, could plausibly conjecture his own opinions, and it is not easy to be satisfied with his account of the convictions of others. He is easily described by negatives. He is not a Roman Catholic, nor a high churchman, nor a Puritan, nor a Presbyterian. Nor, on the other hand, does he seem to be justly chargeable with the scepticism which regards all religions as useful, and none as authoritative. But it would seem not uncharitable to conclude that he is disposed to attribute to God the minimum of physical or moral agency needful to keep the universe in tolerable order. He seldom alludes to the belief of a particular providence, without some hint that it is superstitious. Christianity, with whatever demonstrations of Divine authority it may have been inaugurated, would seem to be regarded as only a philosophy and a moral code—a system making its own way by the force of its perceived merits. His conception of its power is summed up in the phrase, “sublime theology and benevolent morality,”—qualities fitting it to affect the intellect, the imagination and the natural sensibilities, it is true, but also qualities that may be wholly abstracted from the notion of that higher spiritual energy, without the recognition of which the triumphs of the Church are an unsolved riddle. The Divine agency in the matter being limited to originating the central facts revealing the most general doctrines of religion, the several beliefs held by every church and every individual bearing the Christian name, Oriental or Greek, Romanist or Protestant, are only deductions drawn with more or less skill from certain common postulates. Some are more nearly true than others, some have better effects than others; but all of them, however contradictory, are equally forms of Christianity, and have the same degree of *authority*—that is, none at all. The faith which was held by the dominant Church in any age was for that age the Christian faith. The Church of Rome, Mr. Macaulay thinks, was a great blessing until the revival of letters. He even doubts whether England owes



most to Popery or to the Reformation. He knows a good deal respecting the theology of various ages and sects, yet seems hardly to have penetrated beneath their dialectic peculiarities and external signs. Hence nothing can be more vague than the account he gives of the Church of England and the Puritans.

With a general reference to their theological differences, he contrasts the Church of Rome with the Puritans or extreme Protestants in eight particulars, indicating under each the relative position of the Church of England. The peculiarities of the Romish system are, the asserted apostolical succession of bishops, a uniform liturgy recited in the Latin tongue, transubstantiation, priestly vestments, "pantomimic gestures" in worship, the invocation of saints, the multiplication of sacraments, and confession. The Puritans rejected these; condemned episcopacy, committed the order of worship to the discretion of the minister, received the Lord's Supper sitting, refused to apostles, even, the distinctive title of *saint*, abolished confirmation, recognized no grace in holy orders and no virtue in priestly absolution, and abhorred surplices and the sign of the cross in baptism. The Church of England compromised, by holding to episcopacy without claiming for it a Divine right, by using an English liturgy, by kneeling at the Eucharist while condemning its adoration, by retaining confirmation, the surplice, the sign of the cross and the form of absolution, and by substituting the *commemoration*, for the worship, of "saints," as usages edifying and lawful, though not obligatory.

Now these are real differences. But they are only the exterior signs of two opposite principles, of whose existence the historian's elaborate antithesis gives no hint. Starting from a common belief in the sinfulness of man and his consequent exposure to misery, and in the revelation of a redemptive scheme, the two forms of faith diverge widely. One of them lodges the whole power of salvation practically in "the Church." The grace which bringeth salvation is conceived of either under a material figure, as something that dwells in the body of the priest and is communicable by manual contact, or as placed by Divine decree in the power of the priest's

will and obtainable through his intercession. Thus God is removed to a distance from the soul. Between Him and the penitent stand not only the redeeming Christ, but also the Church and the priesthood on earth, to whom the Papists add the saints of the Church in Heaven. Prayer and praise may be commendable acts, but reconciliation with God is made by the application of water, which, through the priest's incantation, is at once "sanctified" by the efficient presence of the Holy Ghost, or in the swallowing of a wafer, which, by a like miraculous energy, has become transformed into, or consubstantiated with, the body of Christ. It is this idea of a vicarious religion ministered to the soul through a human priesthood, that naturally gives rise to the dogmas of apostolic succession and transubstantiation, to the practices of confirmation and sacerdotal absolution, to priestly vestments as the insignia of sacerdotal dignity and power, and to the virtual abolition of public worship in favor of a mere exhibition. Such is the spirit of so-called "Catholicism," whether at Constantinople or at Rome, at Augsburg or at Oxford. The principle is one, the forms of development may vary.

On the other, the Protestant system, man is placed in immediate relations with the Deity. Though God is approached through a Mediator, the Mediator is One "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." The Divine Spirit is supposed to operate immediately in the heart, and to manifest His working by those spiritual affections which are its necessary product. The Church is but a union of Christian men for mutual edification and the good of the world. The ministry are but servants of Christ and of the Church for teaching and guidance. The sacraments are without any inherent efficacy, and benefit only those who receive them in faith.

The Church of England, which is described by the historian as founded on a compromise, is more accurately described as a comprehension of the two systems. There was a compromise in certain exterior matters for the sake of comprehension. English churchmen, if we look at their moving principles rather than to their garb, are not a cross between Romanists and Genevans, but some are "Catholic" and some

Protestant—the one class holding to salvation by the Church, the other to salvation by the immediate grace of God. We do not mean to affirm that the distinction can be so traced as to set all of them plainly on one or the other side of the line; for hereditary and party attachments may cause many of genuine Protestant faith to wear a high-church uniform and contend under high-church colors. But the *principles* of the two systems are radically distinct, and insusceptible of compromise. The opposition of the Puritans was not to surplices and genuflexions, to festivals and rubrics, but to the anti-Christian error of which these, to their minds, were outward signs. They dreaded them, not for any mischief in themselves, but because they tended to promote the superstition from whose yoke the nation had been so hardly freed. They knew that a large portion of both clergy and laity had conformed to whatever creed or worship the government sanctioned, and that the obnoxious ceremonies were retained purposely to make such a transition easy. They saw that the equivocation manifestly tended to facilitate a reversal of the process. Such facilities for transit between Rome and Canterbury were so evidently dangerous that they sought to burn the ships. It is anything but philosophical to accuse them of weak scruples, because they were too earnest in contending for their faith to allow of any parley with its enemies.

Many readers, we presume, have been sadly disappointed at the dark colors in which this history depicts the Puritans. Something very different was expected from the pen that indited their eulogy in the essay on Milton. But that remarkable piece of declamation, which in virtue of its brilliancy probably has more admirers than the author's best essays, with all its wealth of spirit-stirring words, to say the truth, is a piece of splendid non-committalism. The Puritans, we are told, were "no *vulgar* fanatics." Assuredly not; but—they were *fanatics*, after all, it would seem. Their beliefs, their hopes, their fears, for aught that the essayist tells, were unreal—either essentially false, or converted into fiction by their ill-regulated enthusiasm. They "*felt assured*" that their names "were recorded in the Book of Life." "They *esteemed*



*themselves* rich in a more precious treasure," &c. "But the tone of their minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal reach." Were the communion they professed to enjoy with God, and the confident assurance of His favor they avowed, and the authentication of his all-controlling individual providence in which they trusted, among those unattainable things? Were they anything more than "glorious illusions"? The sentences apparently so full of meaning are so exquisitely balanced, that the oftener they are scrutinized the less they seem to say. Nothing is said inconsistent with the utmost scorn for their faith and manners. These, indeed, are very intelligibly hinted at as odious, but waived as mere unsightly excrescences upon what was intrinsically true and noble. It would have been in better taste, we think, if some parts of the history had been penned under the influence of a similar feeling. But it is easy to see how both could be written by the same man without any sacrifice of consistency.

One sentiment which too frequently gives tone to this history, though seemingly reverent, is really, it seems to us, inimical to sound moral judgments. Because Divine Providence overrules evil for good, it is claimed that we ought, on the discovery of such good results, to think less severely of the evil overruled. The climax of this theory of Providence is enunciated in the terse falsehood of Pope, "Whatever is, is right." Mr. Macaulay's intentions, we presume, are far enough from such a universal levelling of moral distinctions. But in particular instances his reasoning is based on principles which would ripen into nothing less noxious. He thinks that the crusades, the pilgrimages, the monastic system, and the sacerdotal usurpations of the middle ages, have been unduly censured. And why? Because the crusades united Christendom against the Mohammedan power; because pilgrimages attracted the rude inhabitants of the north to the centre of civilization; because the monasteries were safe retreats from violence, and sheltered literature and art from the deluge of barbarism; because priestly usurpations were the triumph of moral over physical power, and mitigated the ferocity of tyrants. But did the promoters of these forms

of superstition design these benefits? It is not claimed; there is pretty strong evidence against the claim, if it were made. Then why do they deserve "respectful mention"? The pilgrims were the dupes of a pitiful delusion. The crusaders were possessed by a fanatical passion that had scarcely the semblance of a human, much less of a Christian virtue. The monkish system was founded on no love of letters, and priestly usurpations were certainly more selfish than public-spirited in their intent. Mr. Macaulay has ridiculed the admirers of Laud for parading in proof of his personal excellence letters expressive of zeal for the interests and dignity of his own order. He observes that it may be very proper for a bishop to promote the interest and credit of the clergy;

"and it may be very proper," he adds, "that an alderman should stand up for the tolls of his borough, and an East Indian director for the charter of his company. But it is ridiculous to say that these things indicate piety and benevolence."

He therefore persists in regarding the archbishop with "unmitigated contempt."\* Yet, in certain circumstances, a residuum of public benefit might be obtained from the achievements of such a man by the chemistry of historical analysis, and there can be no doubt that Laud somehow worked into the scheme of Providence for good. Because so much can be said for the mediæval superstitions, do they deserve particular credit for their involuntary good?

Several inviting topics would solicit us onward a long way. But perhaps enough has been said to indicate the degree of appreciation in which we hold this history, and some of the grounds for it. For affluence of information, clearness and breadth of statement, vividness of illustration, descriptive and narrative skill, all under the direction of a well-disciplined judgment and an earnest love of freedom and justice, we know of nothing in our language to compare with it. If, as we have intimated, the author's spirit seems less devout, and his insight into religious movements consequently less profound, than is desirable in the treatment of such a subject, it is a fault common to him with most who have under-

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\* See his Review of Hallam's Constitutional History.

taken it, and is in fact less painfully felt in his pages than in those of some other writers possessing the same political characteristics. The new volumes worthily fulfil the promise of their predecessors. The characters and events described did not call for as brilliant treatment as some that figure in the first two, and the style is a little more subdued. But though there are no passages that will compare for eloquence and impressiveness with several in the last half of the second volume, we discover no loss of interest. One is drawn to the end by an attraction that is superior to the sense of weariness. There is none too much of it. At first view two such volumes seem a large space to be occupied with the history of less than ten years. But those were years in which foundations were laid for ages to come. The acts of the government concerned questions of policy on which their determinations are felt to-day with undiminished power. Yet it was not an era of great men. William of Orange towers far above the statesmen with whom he acted. Mr. Macaulay is blamed for representing the disproportion as so great; but there are the facts: till they are disproved, the hero must stand on that colossal height unrebuked. It was an age of narrowness and feebleness in the Church. The historian is amply fitted to do justice to that part of his subject. No such souls as those of the Reformers and Puritans are to be dealt with, and the deficiencies he shows in attempting to estimate *them* do not appear when he has Sancrofts, and Comptons, and Sherlocks, or even Burnets and Tillotsons, to measure. When contemplating the distance remaining to be traversed, we confess to an apprehension lest the work should exceed the author's remaining age and strength, at the rate he has thus far gone. But with each new volume an accelerated speed will be possible, till we come down to the third George and the American war. We are happy to anticipate the speedy appearance of a fifth volume; and if some part of the whole great design should finally be left unaccomplished, it will be no light achievement to have produced a history of the period between the restoration of the Stuarts and the settlement of the present dynasty, that promises to live as long as the English language.



## ARTICLE III.—ELEMENTS OF GREATNESS IN THE PULPIT ORATOR.

THE expressions, great and little, indicate distinctions recognized by all men, as well the rude as the cultivated, not in regard to masses of matter alone, but to thought and character, to station and conduct. The basis of this universal recognition is found in the difference of feeling with which different objects address the mind. Between the mind and the objects of its contemplations, whether these objects are material or otherwise, there is a certain correspondence, such, that in the absence of every disturbing cause, uniformity may always be expected in the results. The view of a mountain, of the ocean, of the starry heavens, elevates and enlarges the soul of every man. The same is also true of the contemplation of infinitude in space, numbers or duration. And similar emotions, though, perhaps, of less intensity, are originated by the contemplation of intellectual achievements of a high order, and by exhibitions of exalted moral qualities. Who, without emotions of the sublime, reads the Geometry of Euclid and the Principia of Newton, or views the conduct of Daniel, and the career of Howard?

In all this we discern the hand of the Great Artificer ; and, hence, infer, with perfect assurance, that to regale ourselves with the contemplation of whatever is truly imposing in nature, art, science or morals, is agreeable to His will. Nor can it be doubted, that our intellectual and moral constitution has been purposely so framed, that we should feel, directly and spontaneously, not only the peculiar influence of whatever is great, but aspirations also to be great ourselves ; great in intellect, in moral worth, in social standing, in professional skill and success. So that it would be no unworthy service to fan this passion to a more glowing heat, and to point out avenues conducting to its cherished object. Leaving, however, a general subject and general remarks, which, like divergent rays, often become more powerless the more

they are protracted, we select a single profession, and offer to our readers some thoughts on

*The Elements of True Greatness in a Pulpit Orator.*

Greatness is not identical with popularity. Nor is the one, necessarily, either the cause or a concomitant of the other. Popularity is a green-house plant. It cannot abide the chill and the roughness of free common air. And, besides, it is ephemeral anywhere. Greatness, on the other hand, is the mountain oak, which derides the tornado; or the granite hill whose sleep is undisturbed by the earthquake, and whose years are counted by centuries.

Greatness in the minister of religion is manifested in an ability to secure, and the fact of securing, so far as human agency can do it, the legitimate end of his office. And what is this end? The manifestation of the Divine glory by rendering man obedient to the faith. The preacher is to draw together into the sanctuary, from Sabbath to Sabbath, and year after year, all descriptions of persons, the poor, the affluent, the bold, the timid, the erudite, the untaught, the high-minded, the grovelling, the cautious, the credulous, the active, the sluggish, the moral, the vicious. Of this assembly, so heterogeneous in the points indicated, yet homogeneous in the circumstance of being all sinners, needing alike the provisions of the Gospel scheme, he is to awaken and hold the attention, to instruct the understanding, to interest the feelings, to elevate and purify the affections, and to influence the conduct, in such manner and degree that every relation both to God and man shall receive proper attention.

This work, in its *later and more important* parts, is never accomplished (it is proper to premise) without a supernatural influence. In vain do we impose the task on mere genius and learning, or fiery zeal, or patient toil. Simply human influence encountering the perverse and obstinate will of a sinner, is like the moonbeam's idle play on the surface of the iceberg, or like the breath of May whispering at evening twilight through the foliage of the gnarled oak. To dissolve the ice, the glorious sun must shine. To rive the oak, heaven's fiery bolt must be launched. "It is not by might nor by power, but

by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." There is a "treasure in earthen vessels," but "the excellency of the power" is of God.

A good opinion of the preacher's talents, attainments, deportment, and piety, is necessary. Unless these be regarded with respect, he cannot secure for himself the attention, or even the attendance of an audience. But let him once establish to himself a reputation for eminence in these particulars, thus meeting the demands of that mental and moral constitution which man inherits directly from his Maker, and, like the central orb of a material system, he has already thrown out over a community a far-reaching, vigorous, and steady influence. Perfectly assured that he is no religious charlatan, but a philosopher in the science of theology, and, that he seeks not theirs, but them, they regard it as not unworthy of their self-respect to be enrolled among his congregation. And, although they may be strongly entrenched in depravity, and may bar their hearts to the assaults of Divine truth, yet the high consideration, in which the preacher's qualifications are held by them, is no mean preparative for that docility, without which neither conviction will deepen in the mind of the sinner, nor sanctification in that of the saint.

The sacred oracles speak of a light poured by the Holy Spirit upon the human understanding. But that illumination, whatever it may be, accomplishes its important ends, not so much, probably, by any direct and positive action on the intellectual faculties themselves, as by improving our moral feelings, and thus setting the mind free from their beclouding influence. That ideas and trains of ideas, since the completion of the sacred canon, are suggested to the mind by a direct, Divine influence, we would not, indeed, deny. Though if such be the fact, are not the favored individuals so far truly inspired, and in that proportion raised of course above, and carried beyond the sacred canon? The mode, however, of imparting Divine illumination is involved in so much obscurity, that you hardly expect any man of clear head and honest heart to tell you that he ever so received any particular proposition. Consequently, in the case of



any given subject, which is ably discussed from the pulpit, you witness the manner, not of the Holy Spirit, but of the man. The conceptions and combinations, the form and coloring, are all the preacher's.

While, however, native talents of the highest order are to be preferred, we would not affirm but that the pulpit may yet be a suitable place for the exertion of those which may be marked by several gradations below, though not so as to place them much below mediocrity. Whatever the Scripture may mean, which says, "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty," it certainly does not mean that a man of a weak mind bears about him a Divine warrant to appear at the altar, and from Sabbath to Sabbath challenge the attention of a congregation. The man may possess tenderness and unaffected sympathy for man, and may be regarded as a paragon of piety, so as to meet the claims of the sorrowing, the sick, and the dying, and also those of the prayer and conference room; and his prayers and exhortations may kindle the devotions of his brethren, and arrest the attention of the careless; yet still something may be wanting.

Invest such an one with the name and authority of an ambassador of Christ, and what is the lesson taught by the sequel? What but that he has withdrawn his hand from the anvil, the last, or the plough, with the best of intentions, indeed, but not for the best of reasons. He has found, to his sorrow, that the people are ever and everywhere hard to please, and the people, that the Lord never made him for a minister. A good deacon had begun to be formed, but men applied their unskilful fingers to the work, and spoiled it forever.

Natural endowments are not alone necessary. There must be the disciplining of the intellect, and the accumulation of varied learning. To this remark the mission of the fishermen of Galilee, not versed in human philosophy and general literature, offers no exception. For, that those men, divested of the extraordinary authority and accomplishments miraculously conferred upon them, would have been fit instruments for the establishment of Christianity among the Jews, the

Romans, and the Greeks, is a proposition no considerate man can entertain.

In a country where the inhabitants are distributed into orders, as of lords and peasants, the latter, occupying the retired hills and valleys, and removed alike from refined virtues and refined vices, may be essentially benefited by a pious pastor, though the Bible be his only book of philosophy and literature, as well as of religion. But surely no experience of Divine aid, such as modern times have witnessed, can warrant such a minister attempting to meet the demands of the cultivated assemblies of the present day.

The times call for an educated minister. An individual of untrained powers knows not how to go to work. Unused to the exercise of the conceptive faculty, how can he cast a subject into propositions of such a kind and number as will reveal its nature? How, without the discipline of the logical faculty, can he decide on the connection and dependence of propositions, and arrange them for argumentative effect? Whence will he obtain both the precision and the copiousness in the use of language, which are conceded by all to be necessary to convey his thoughts truly and agreeably to the minds of his hearers? All this is essential—even in the most illiterate assemblies. But enough of this. Ignorance instructs, pleases, persuades—nobody. Not ignorance, but knowledge is power.

The influence upon the mind of a rigid and protracted study of the exact sciences, of language, of metaphysics and of history, is very great. It cannot, indeed, create mind, nor supply fundamental deficiencies. But it exalts, it quickens, it energizes every intellectual faculty. So that, on the presentation of a subject, conceptions of almost every possible variety, suited to the case, start up in crowded succession, as if evoked by magic. The necessary distinctions, the resemblances and contrasts, the congruities and incongruities are perceived intuitively; and a selection and combination are made of divisions, definitions, illustrations, proofs and applications, such, that there is one thing—and all of one thing—exhibited in a just proportion and symmetry of parts. The effect on our intellectual and sensitive nature,

when counteracting causes are out of the question, is like that produced on a body by converging the rays of the sun. The understanding and the heart are illumined and warmed. The exhibition of truth with such a grandeur of manner tells at every stroke. An impression is made, having a fit relation to the nature and force of its cause; an impression which, like chiselings in monumental marble, possesses the elements of permanency. So that the efforts of the pulpit, during any given hour, do not begin and end with—"beating the air."

But a single effective stroke may sustain a positive and proportional relation to the end, as a whole, without accomplishing such end. To this a hundred or a thousand of them may be necessary. A mass of granite, that cleaves under the sledge, at the hundredth blow, has felt, as causative of the final effect, ninety-nine just such blows before. The trained preacher is able to repeat such strokes. By the very power by which, in a given performance, he has presented you with one thing, and all of one thing, he can present you with the whole of any other one thing appropriate to his calling. Having, by education superadded to talents, become master of the process which, in one instance, elicits and condenses, and pours on the light and heat of truth, he is enabled to repeat the process indefinitely. He is competent, in a general sense, to the task of exhibiting the whole of truth in its natural order and connections, so as to ensure the whole influence of truth.

Under such exhibitions an audience will not habitually doze. The laws of mind are met by the speaker. So that, not only the activity of the mind is excited, but its comprehension of knowledge is facilitated, and its hold on it rendered firm. Thus taught, from year to year, a people will grow in knowledge.

Preachers need to be trained in history, in the sciences, and in general literature; without it they are perpetually betraying, not the want of a comprehensive, discriminating, and condensing power alone, but certain palpable deficiencies and mistakes, which greatly detract from their usefulness; being to their hearers occasions of diminished respect, and



are shorne of their power. No man can long preach even the pure doctrine of Christ, without saying much which has some relation to the general subjects of human knowledge. And, does it add to the sacredness and dignity of the profession to be forever misapprehending these matters, perverting their relations, and involving contradictions? There are such things as facts in nature, and facts in history, and facts in logic. And, though the mental and moral constitution of man is not so well understood as a demonstrative science, there are yet in that, some facts and principles which are regarded as settled. With none of these is any religious truth ever at war. But how often does a person of scanty knowledge cross the lines of natural and historical truth, of truth in logic and in metaphysics! Can you believe that individual to be altogether fit for the sacred vocation, who, in proof of Christianity, should inform his hearers that Isaiah deliver'd his prophecies many thousand years before the birth of our Saviour? or who, in the illustration of a text, should say, that David referred to a stupendous aqueduct, constructed by King Solomon, some years after David had slept with his fathers?

*Variety* has charms for all men, and is important in the pulpit as a means of power. The eloquent Staughton once said to us that his pulpit reputation (sustained, as many readers of this "Quarterly" know, at a high point for a series of years in Philadelphia) was to be attributed, in no slight degree, to his "everlasting variety." To secure this important advantage, every method should be resorted to consistent with the proper connection of related subjects, and with the peculiar state of mind sometimes prevailing among a people.

Nor, to an active and discriminating mind, is this a matter of great difficulty. For, though the Gospel involves a few chief points, which require a more frequent exhibition as well as special prominence, still the range of materials for religious discourses is highly diversified and of vast extent. And even the more important points can be set forth in such different connections, and with such a diversity of elucidation, of proof and application, that, though "old things," they will yet have the effect of new.

The public mind is sometimes easily affected. Of every circumstance which has a direct tendency to induce this susceptibility, it is greatly wise in the religious teacher to take every possible advantage. Any important revolution in society generally, or in any considerable portion of it; any signal discovery; a stinted measure of things needful to life, or a great exuberance of them; the ravages of a storm, an earthquake, a conflagration, or a pestilence; the event of war; the return of peace; can be seized upon by a speaker of imaginative and versatile talent, and be made subservient to the more effective inculcation of such moral and religious truths as, on the principle of association, whether of contrast or of comparison, are by it readily suggested. The late splendid ornament of the pulpit, just referred to, was specially distinguished for this dexterous manner, this true and noble "*ad captandum*." The Reverend Doctor Sharp, in his letter to Doctor Lynd, has furnished some beautiful illustrations, two of which we will here present:

"When intelligence was received from Spain," says Dr. Sharp, "of the downfall of the infamous Godoy, who was styled the 'Prince of Peace,' Dr. Staughton delivered, on the following Sabbath, a most interesting discourse from the passage in Isaiah, 'He shall be called—the Prince of Peace.' At another time when a great encampment in Europe had been surprised and routed, by one of the contending armies, he preached a sermon from the words, 'The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them,' which almost electrified his hearers."

The efforts of the preacher, at such times, are aided by two causes of direct and lively action. The events in question excite and warm the minds of the community. The other cause is the increased interest awakened in them by having a discussion suitably connected with views which are already strongly stirring their feelings. It may be added, also, that these agitations of the public sensibilities invite the pulpit orator to higher efforts in forming and embodying his conceptions, and to bolder strokes in delivery; just as, under the favoring influence of a general and solemn attention to religious concerns, such as often prevails in what are called "revival scenes," one can, with the best results, indulge in

strains which, in an ebb of religious feeling, would, by appearing overwrought, be uttered comparatively in vain.

A judicious, incidental improvement of such uncommon occurrences, is not to abandon the Cross. It is closely following the great Master-Teacher. Its immediate effect in reference to the truths enforced are beneficial, and it induces a higher estimate of the minister's abilities; and while it shows him to be concerned with everything that concerns his species, his weight of character is augmented, and so, of course, his power of doing good.

Variety is often very injuriously disregarded in the choice of texts. For example, a preacher concludes his morning discourse by giving notice that the subject will be resumed in the evening: and, not having yet done justice to his views, he announces, on the next Sabbath, the same old text. Who needs the spirit of a diviner, to tell what will be the effect of this sameness? In one out of a hundred cases it may, perhaps, be good. A man of rare powers and industry is presumed always to have something worthy of our ear. So that when, after having, on a given passage, once commended himself to our approbation, he again proposes the same, our expectation may be awakened. We know that man does not take a text in vain; and, therefore, our curiosity may be eager to ascertain what there still remains of a topic once supposed to be exhausted. In general, however, the reverse of this will be experienced. We dislike to be stationary. Advance suits our constitution. The sound of an old text comes heavy and dull on the ear.

The cast of manner which, in itself, aside from the favor usually bestowed on it by the Spirit, seems best suited to the proposed end, may be well designated by the epithet *bold*. This quality has a relation to the *doctrine* inculcated. If, in the great controversy between God and man, there is but one fair side; if God is wholly right, and man wholly wrong, the ambassador of Heaven is entitled—is rather bound—to take high ground. The Divine character and claims are fixed. Any representation of them which would imply weakness, or doubt, or mutability, offers to man so much encouragement—which his pride and independence of character will



be sure to seize upon—to justify and strengthen his rebellion against his Maker; and must, therefore, preclude that powerful conviction of guilt and helplessness, without which no sinner ever did, or ever will throw down his arms and surrender himself at the mercy of his Sovereign. The same consequence results also from any indefiniteness or wavering of views in regard to the position and character of man.

And, in general, if the exhibitions made by the preacher, rather than what a man happens to know of himself, are to be relied on as a means of convincing the judgment, and of drawing the heart off from the world to God; that is, if the Divine economy is by “the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe,” then nothing can ensue under a partial and timid exhibition, but perfect failure. There is, in operation, no cause adequate to the wished-for effect. Conscience has quite enough to do in grappling with the vanity, and pride, and lust, and worldliness of man, even when the authority of the pulpit comes to her aid, and sets these obliquities and defilements of human nature in such a prominence, and marks them by such colors and appellations, that no selfishness, no stupidity can misapprehend them. Even the all-conquering Spirit ceases to be victorious here. He disowns the instrument and stands aloof, offended. His sympathy and influence are with the un mutilated, undisguised truth. The sword which He will deign to wield, is one of double edge, and drawn.

This is the view presented by the Bible. And what, on the same point, is the lesson taught by experience and observation? Precisely the same. An accommodating, temporizing minister, though he may secure some adherents to his depreciated creed, wins no converts to the Master. He does not bring the guilty within the range of mercy.

Bold and commanding views of religious truth, to ensure their complete effect, should be set forth in bold and commanding *language*. Nobody will deny that there are low words and cant phrases, and vulgar tropes, which, of themselves, are pithy, and which with some become more so the more they are out of place; that is, the graver and more sacred the subjects about which they are employed. Piti-

able is the man who, to raise attention, or rather to induce a stare and a smile, thinks it not unsuited to his assumed character to have recourse to an artifice so wretched. There surely is an order of language, a cast of style, which is appropriate to the gravity of the Christian ministry; and which, while it gratifies an elevated taste, does not, of necessity, offend any of less correctness and delicacy.

- A bold and earnest delivery constitutes no insignificant part of a preacher's power. Everywhere, in every serious business, boldness and energy of action not only have a strong bearing on the point of success, but are of themselves exceedingly agreeable, stirring up and exhilarating the spirits alike of performers and of spectators. For entertaining and displaying this life, this vigor, there is in public speaking the most ample scope. At the bar, in the Senate chamber, and even before the grave tribunal, scarcely any limits are prescribed to the vehemence of the orator. He is allowed to imagine that the case he is conducting absorbs all human interests throughout all time.\* And, if this sublime conception, like the electric element, fill him, soul and body, with contagious fire, so that over all the breathless throng it spreads in one continuous sheet, still the stigma of hair-brained enthusiasm is not suffered to light on him. Such a man is a "magnus Apollo."

If, now, such is the warmth allowed by all men to secular oratory, must the pulpit orator be placed under limitations? Must no scenes attendant on man's dying hour, no images of the grand and terrible, standing out in relief on the judgment-day, no wailings from below, no Halleluiahs from above, be allowed to inflame his spirit? Must no lightning flash from his eye? Must nothing thrill from his tongue? Must no muscle of his frame be in unusual play? Must the preacher alone of all public speakers be self-possessed and cool? Such, indeed, is the decision of some who affect to be more purely intellectual than the mass of their race, and who, to support this affectation, will decry and avoid a ministry characterized by a direct and impassioned eloquence.

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\* See De Or, L. I., c. 57, near the close.

There is in bold preaching a reflex action. The speaker, from his very manner of conceiving, couching, and uttering truth, is aware that he has undertaken something, and that he is, consequently, responsible for a respectable and useful issue. This thought awakens and nerves his energies afresh. So that what a Roman bard says of his heroes can be fitly applied in the present case—

— Possunt, quid posse videntur.

Boldness awakens at once in the auditors both a lively and delightful emotion, and an expectation of a performance worthy of the place and of the occasion. This exhilaration of spirits, next after the impressive influence of the Holy Spirit, is the antecedent of the happiest results. Attention is aroused. The mind is warmed. And, as the well-developed and concatenated ideas are evolved, they are eagerly taken hold of and fixed in their place.

The consideration, however, which, more than any other, both justifies and requires this quality, is the *message* that the preacher is commissioned to announce. No other topics are so momentous as those with which he deals. None embrace facts of such awful grandeur. In no other controversy, perhaps, except the one with which the message is concerned, is all justice on one side. With reason, therefore, is the "legate of the skies" expected to put on an air of decision and of earnestness. Timidity and inertness mark him in our esteem as a traitor. False to his own avowed character, false, also, to the claims of his Sovereign, he will not fail to be regarded as false to our interests.

The quality now under consideration will not, we trust, be confounded with that severity and roughness which some appear to recognize as ministerial boldness. It is not every exhibition of raging passion developed under a pulpit performance, that, of necessity, has for its object the doctrine taught. The teacher, himself, rather than his theme, or anything proper to his theme, may sometimes stir the angry tide in the sinner's breast.

Genuine pulpit boldness is not incivility; is not impudence; is not the exponent of a secret satisfaction that



there are, in the hand of a mighty angel, vials of indignation to be poured out. Bold positions, bold conceptions, bold representations, are perfectly consistent with that gentleness and courtesy which characterize the intercourse of men of urbane manners and refined sensibilities. The relation which, as a man, the preacher sustains to man, ought to render him civil; ought to restrain him from whatever might have the appearance of arraigning and anathematizing his fellow sinners. The pulpit, indeed, exalts a man, but only in proportion as he is meek.

In aiming at boldness, in its several departments, there is a liability in men, of a certain temperament, to sink out of sight one other important quality of an effective manner,—we mean, *kindness*. The affectionate manner has a powerful tendency to conciliate. It gains the eye and the ear, disarms prejudice against the subject, allays jealousy or suspicion respecting the speaker, and opens the avenues to the heart.

The fountains of this manner are laid in the inner nature of all men. Their depth and breadth, however, are not uniform; and even when, in themselves, they may happen to be so in different persons, their natural play may be greatly modified by other constitutional and acquired differences. The ordinary external signs, therefore, cannot always be regarded as a true and full exponent. Happy is the man who, to great mental abilities, can superadd the potent charms of these natural signs. If, in any degree, the original possession can be improved by study and culture, the importance of the subject addresses itself strongly to the consideration of all educators, and of all persons undergoing the process of education. This point, as well as the whole department of elocution, is treated everywhere, perhaps, with very unwise neglect.

Preachers differ very much in respect to boldness, and with happy effect. One, by the boldness and strength of his general character, may be fitted to command a manly and formal respect; another, by the milder features of human nature, to win an artless affection. The rougher genius may not be loved as soon and as familiarly as the milder; but, by

allowing time to establish his claims, he may become the object of a love more solid, perhaps, and, possibly, more enduring. Of these characters each has its advantages. It would be well if each could retain its own, and acquire those of the other; but, in aiming to combine them, there is danger of losing more than may be gained. The Peters and the Johns, the "sons of thunder" and the "sons of consolation," cannot be easily compounded.

To make a great pulpit orator, attention must be given to special preparation. No order of mind, however exalted, and no general attainments, however ample, including even theological learning, can supersede its necessity. Even with the abilities now supposed, a slight attention to a subject in drawing the outlines, and a subsequent filling up with the first conceptions which may arise on delivery, will not bring out results answering to the standard of greatness. Sound can be produced in this way; but sound, so produced, will soon die away, and those charmed by it will have nothing left—not even the "heavenly tone."

A painter who aims at making a strong impression, groups his objects with care and discrimination, presenting some in a prominent view, and throwing others into the shade. The same principle should prevail in a discourse. Feeble conceptions, and thoughts slightly related, coming into contact with loftier and closer views, throw an air of looseness and languor over the whole.

It is the business of preparation, by deep and protracted thinking, to summon up a multitude of conceptions, and out of them to form such a collection and arrangement as, by striking the mind most agreeably, will, so to speak, tinge and impress it most permanently with the character of the main subject.

It will not be thought foreign to the point in hand to touch the question respecting the office of the pen in making the preparation required.

We have been told, by a living preacher of some note, that, in a merely mental preparation, he can so nearly measure the length of his sentences and count their number as to know beforehand, within a couple of minutes, the time he

would require the attention of an audience. Though we should concede the fact of such power, it may be questionable whether such exercise of it ought, as a general thing, to be recommended. A preparation thus made can hardly be so complete as when the pen is put in requisition. The mental effort must be more intense, and, probably, more protracted. So that what is worth less is made to cost more. And, besides, the production is only a mental possession, which a brief space of time will seldom fail so to dissipate as to require, in the act of repossession, should occasion call for such an act, a further unnecessary expenditure. If, then, we regard the points of economy and of completeness in the production, considered as a production prior to the delivery, the pen should, perhaps, seldom be dispensed with, especially by persons young in the profession.

But the power of a merely mental preparation, such as has now been supposed, if possessed by any, is not the common lot of even the best and the most cultivated order of the human mind. On the part of most men, patient industry with the pen will produce discourses, with which, if we regard the various constituents of excellence, unwritten, though studied addresses, cannot be brought into comparison. The examination of the matter, the choice of words, and the construction and arrangement of the periods, one by one, through a long discourse, can hardly be effected judiciously without writing. And, to bring a discourse up to the point worthy of one's powers, and suited to tell most directly and efficiently upon the judgment and passions of an assembly, the author must write and re-write. In the language of the school-room, transpositions, additions, exclusions, substitutions, and limitations will be more or less requisite in every first, and second, and third draft. Not only the execution, but the ideas themselves, will call for this process. The first draft by a writer of limited practice, though he may happen to be no contemptible genius, will often be found to contain views, or shades of views, strongly antagonistical to each other. For reasons like these Horace penned his expressions, "*Limæ labor*," and "*Sæpe veritas stylum*." They have a meaning, and, also, a use to subserve,



other than to furnish us with pretty quotations. So thought Newton, and Johnson, and other great men.

Besides the higher excellence which the pen imparts to a single composition, in securing "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn," the habitual use of it, subjected to a rigid criticism with regard both to the matter and the manner, is, perhaps, the most reliable source of growing power, whether we consider the discipline alone of the intellect, or its appropriate furniture. Reading, without deep and protracted reflection, is idle pastime. And when the subjects are not mere commonplaces, when beauties or principles lie deep in the subject, the time of thinking to that of reading ought to be in the high ratio of three, four, or five to one. And even when this rule has been complied with, the trial of committing to paper the same thoughts, in a manner strictly one's own; will sometimes show that merely superficial views, shadowy outlines, have as yet been obtained. A good illustration and proof may be drawn from many a person's experience in regard to some ancient classic. It is one thing to talk about the meaning from the bench of the pupil, or perchance from the chair of the professor, and another thing to give the meaning, precise and lucid, from the point of the pen.

An unthinking man, to be sure, may write without thinking, and may flatter himself that he has reached the excellencies of the true "*currente calamo*;" just as some persons seem to resolve the "*ore rotundo*" into—noise. This is, perhaps, sufficiently attested by the fact, everywhere complained of, that there is so much written, and printed, too, which is hardly worth the reading. But in a man of judgment and of taste, the effort of writing, more, perhaps, than anything else, will create a necessity for thinking. Hence the philosophy of the remark, that the best way to become versed in any department of knowledge is, to make a book on the subject.

This manner of preparing for the pulpit, it cannot be disguised, is attended with pain. It checks the native tendency of the mind to play and luxuriate at large, like the unconfined winds in their easy gambols over the hills and through the

vales. It draws the action of its powers down to a point, and subjects them to long-continued strain and pressure, as by a weight. By this operation, when really strenuous and protracted, the mind becomes the subject of fatigue and pain, not less severe than the physical nature feels under the most arduous toils. So that who can be surprised at the large number of those who, frankly avowing the irksomeness of composing with the pen, content themselves with crude and meagre preparations, trusting to we know not what influence, to make their sermons on delivery, perfect and beautiful things of life?

Nor can the diminished amount of good effected by a preacher thus irresolute be matter of surprise. We compare him now, not with others, but with himself, as he would become by a rigid discipline. What is it but the best thoughts and the best expressions that the preacher, so far as his part is regarded, can rely on for effect? And what is it but the truth—and the whole truth—which, as an instrument, is plied by the Almighty Spirit in the transformation of man's moral nature? Now, it is idle to deny that, as Cicero in his "*Orator*" intimates, the best thoughts and the best expressions are those which come out from under the pen; or, in other words, to endeavor to maintain that a man, in presence of an audience, can utter, off-hand, truth in a better manner—that is, more connectedly and perspicuously, than in the quiet of his study he can write it. When, therefore, men claim that they can make sensible speeches, but complain that they can write nothing sensible or weighty, we may hint to them, that possibly their writings appear as sensible and as weighty as do their speeches to their intelligent and thinking hearers. To this remark there may seem to be—perhaps there may be—some few exceptions; as in case of men of mature age, who, while they never did write, have inured themselves to speaking extemporaneously, but with care, in public.\*

Sympathy with whatever concerns man gives the minister of religion a stronghold on the general regard of mankind. He must be a citizen of his country, and, indeed, of the

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\* The length of this article precludes any remarks on the use of manuscripts in the pulpit.

world; able to say, by word and by deed, what, uttered rightfully in the best days of Rome, secured for the speaker the plaudits of the whole people, "I am a man." His duties in this relation will require him to keep himself acquainted with the march of civilization, of science and general learning, and of all the great movements which seem destined to modify and improve the domestic, social, religious, or political condition of man. Without this he cannot take both comprehensive and special views, for the time being, of man's duty to man. He falls behind his age, and finds himself regarded as less and less fit to be a leader of the people, even in his own specific field.

But when we perceive him fairly linked with the general interests of the race, we regard him as a brother indeed. And this feeling of regard will become deeper and warmer, as this general good-will in the preacher assumes more distinct and more glowing forms in scenes of distress among the people of his own charge. To this result it is not necessary that, by our own sorrows, we should ourselves be specially the objects of his humane attentions. Attached more or less directly to every congregation, there are those—the poor, the sick, the heart-stricken—whose circumstances make a demand on his philanthropy. It is the exhibition of goodness involved in meeting such demands, that, like some magic wand, tunes to approbation and delight the deep-laid chords of our moral constitution.

The reflection, too, that we ourselves, however secure now, may, by untoward events, become identified with the sorrowing, who need the balm of sympathy, comes in to swell our feeling of approbation and delight. How much in character is this sympathy when adorning an accredited servant of the Great Sympathizer, who "went about doing good"! If, when grief has invaded our own hearths, or those of our neighbors, our pastor has been ready with his tears and his solace, how has he established and entwined himself in our confidence and our affections! And when afterwards, from the pulpit, it has been his pleasure to press us with the entreaties of the Gospel, or his painful duty to draw vividly to our mental vision "the terrors of the Lord," what a support



have these labors found in our knowledge of the kindly nature of the man!

To the varied display of this mild virtue, as much, perhaps, as to the bold spirit of his sermons, did Payson owe the stronghold which he is conceded to have had on the regard of his parishioners. This, also, together with prudence, was the forte of the late Dr. Bolles. And, in a wider view, what consideration, so effectually as that of their humanity, has embalmed the memory of such men as Howard and Wilberforce, and Carey and Buchanan.

But let a preacher, when he approaches the abodes of sadness, take on the heart and aspect of a lion, like a pastor we once knew, who, on entering the parlor of a widowed member of his church, whose heart was then bleeding under fresh strokes of bereavement, exclaimed, "Well, madam, you are not mad against God, I hope;" and he will break the "bruised reed." Or, let him seem to avoid, either spontaneously or studiously, all contact with common life, fixing on the study and the pulpit as the only places where he is to strike out a thought or utter a word, and he becomes insulated in fact not less than in appearance. He takes hold of nobody, and nobody takes hold of him. So that, though he may be full of fire, he has the benefit all to himself. Not a particle passes off to electrify any other soul.

To do great things in his profession a minister must have a deep-seated passion for his appropriate work—such, that singleness of aim shall mark his whole career. Division of labor is not less a point of economy in great moral enterprises than in physical operations. The acquaintance, already alluded to, which sympathy with whatever concerns man calls on the preacher to make and preserve with the state and progress of science and literature, of general politics and religion, does not require him to stand forth as a leader in every field; nor to explore all events and causes with the scrutiny of a philosopher, so as to become a universal expositor. An ambition to shine in every circle, to appear competent to the task of discussing and settling all questions involved in the theory and practice of husbandry, manufacture, commerce and government; to be, in a word, a high priest

in the temple of nature, and command the keys, not alone of a few of its apartments, but of all its recesses and labyrinths, may be left to the pretensions of a Gorgias, but cannot be entertained by any preacher of the Gospel. Nor can a single pursuit be placed in any prominence by the side of his own proper work. The labors of his own field will task all his powers. Even many enterprises, whose special aim is kindred with his own, can receive from him little more than a look of friendly recognition. That was a hasty avowal, therefore, once made by a youthful pastor in a cabinet of minerals, when he said, "My whole soul is absorbed in geology." And it was a fine rebuke which the avowal met with from a minister venerable for age, who, laying his hand gently on the young man's shoulder, and smiling rather soberly, said, "My young brother, I thought a minister of Jesus Christ should have his whole soul absorbed in the 'glorious Gospel of the blessed God.'"

Excellence in a pursuit springs from a certain enthusiasm—an enthusiasm which controls the intellectual and moral nature of man, and to a great extent even his physical. Was Napoleon great? His greatness was the offspring of a mighty enthusiasm, exercising a mighty control over all his nature. Now, it is the nature of enthusiasm to be exclusive. The spell is broken by a multiplicity of objects.

When, therefore, you see a preacher often at the exchange, or occupying a seat in a legislative hall, or flying, as on the wings of the wind, from city to city, to regulate public sentiment in regard to some one form of human woe, or some one mode of accomplishing a specific good, as the suppression of intemperance, or gambling, or licentiousness, you may be prepared to subtract something from his efficiency as a minister of Jesus Christ; and the more so, perhaps, in proportion as he increases his weight of character in the commercial or political world, or gathers glory from his exploits as the unique agent of some human organization. His passion, his enthusiasm for the Cross—the entire and well-proportioned scheme struck out by Omniscience for the correction of all evils—has either changed its object altogether, or lost its expansion over the whole object, and become condensed

around some little point, real or imaginary, of that object. To this condensation of passion upon an inadequate object, can, possibly, be referred certain phenomena not very uncommon in the present age, and not very unlike some of the concomitants of insanity. One man will tell you that the fibres of lust have pervaded and encompassed both the world and the Church, and that the Gospel, as a whole, does not supply the caustic which can silently eat these fibres away. Some human laboratory can furnish a more active and searching article. Another proclaims that all Christendom has forgotten the great commission, and that she can do nothing successfully for her own safety and purification, until the millions of Pagan lands are evangelized. A third has found out that dollars and prayers will all be thrown away upon the poor heathen abroad, so long as the clank of fetters is heard on the poor heathen at home. And so of each and every point, either great or little, around which is closely contracted that great and noble passion, that ought to be spread out in due proportion over the whole Gospel economy.

Now, when occupants of the pulpit, alike with the laity, are drawn into various wild speculations, connected with gain and social order, and human perfectibility, and into heated crusades against this or the other human organization, and thus, as we have seen, lose their balance, we find, in the direct influence on themselves, sufficient cause for their diminished usefulness as ministers of a spiritual and holy religion. But the mischief is not thus circumscribed. The community have a general sense of what is propriety in the clergyman. They expect him to make full proof of his ministry ; and cannot, without diminished respect, behold him descending to matters of doubtful utility—not to say of doubtful dignity. Whether, in our own country, within the last forty years, the clerical office has not depreciated in standing and power by an intermeddling with the affairs of Cæsar, is a problem.

The bearing, whether direct or indirect, which piety, artless and warm, in the heart and in the life, has on the success of a preacher's public efforts, is a matter of no inferior consideration. Much might be said of its suitability to insure the Divine approval and blessing. Submitting all things to



the will of God, and involving an entire ultimate dependence on Him, and unceasing prayer for His aid, it is the one great thing which is specially pleasing to heaven. As it honors heaven, so it is wont to receive honor from heaven.

But our concern now is with piety in a different relation, as it affects the labors of the pulpit independently of its acceptableness to God. Though perhaps unnecessary hyperboles have sometimes been employed in setting forth the elevating and expanding tendency of this feeling upon all the merely intellectual powers, yet it cannot be doubted that its influence, in this respect, is most decided and happy. It involves such a thirst for all knowledge connected with God's displays of himself, such an honesty of purpose in all investigations, and such a vigorous and unwearied industry, that, without superadding anything to the ordinary, original principles which govern mind, elevation and enlargement of soul must ensue. Hence are secured higher abilities for the sacred vocation. Hence greater labors are accomplished; and with a boldness, a directness, a zeal, and a tenderness, always and everywhere hard to be withstood. Here, then, is a higher degree of absolute personal power in the preacher. Consequently, more distinguished results may be expected to follow.

And more than this. He possesses and wields an accessory power, derived from the effect which the bare consideration of rare sincerity and devotion will everywhere work in the hearers. A great and well-established reputation for religion secures for a man a deeper veneration on the part of society at large than is usually awarded to genius and learning. Hence the assumption of uncommon sanctity in all religious pretenders.

Any man, embracing in himself, originally and by acquisition, the several points we have touched upon, must be venerable. Holiness, benevolence, and heaven, are associated with his presence. He is invested with authority in its best sense. He has weight of character. His voice is the voice, not indeed of an oracle, nor of a god, but of a true messenger of the true God. And when, after years of successful toil, he is gathered to his fathers, the surviving church sheds copious tears, and says of him—"A great man is fallen in Israel."

## ARTICLE IV.—LEWES' LIFE OF GOETHE.

*The Life and Works of Goethe; with Sketches of his Age and Contemporaries, from Published and Unpublished Sources.* By G. H. LEWES, author of "The Biographical History of Philosophy," etc. In Two Volumes. Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1856.

THIS is the first Biography of Goethe in the English language. We have had sketches of the poet, conversations of Eckermann and others, eulogies, slanders, criticisms, translations of his works, and even a kind of autobiography of his earliest years. We have had the materials for a biography; but no master has been found to combine them with cunning hand, and show us the image of the "many-sided man." The very multitude of *Büchlein* and *Skizzen* embarrassed and bewildered us. The poet had so long been the great central figure in German literature, had been sketched so frequently by friendly and by unfriendly pens, that we could nowhere calmly see him in his real simplicity and majesty. Again and again have we anxiously asked, Who shall ever guide us along the stream of that wondrous life, which sprang up to light in the *Grosse Hirsch Graben* at Frankfort-on-the-Main, sported babbling through the years of early childhood, roared and foamed through a passionate youth, flowed deep and earnest through maturer manhood, and then widened so gradually and serenely, and blended almost imperceptibly with the waters of that boundless ocean whither every rivulet of life is hastening?

The life and the works of few men have been so freely and differently criticised as those of Goethe. He has been depicted as a saint and as a sinner, as an unequalled genius and as merely a man of dexterous intellect, as a German and as a Greek, as a universal mind and as a selfish mind, as an aristocrat and as a republican, as an Idealist and as a Realist, as a Christian and as a heathen. Indeed, there are scarcely any characteristics, whether of mind or of heart, which have not

been ascribed to him. It was then due to the memory of him, who never disliked an honest and manly criticism, and to the world, before whom he stood in the sacred office of Poetic Teacher, that the history of his life should be written with minuteness and candor. Mr. Lewes has performed this service with honesty and ability. He has given us a life-like picture of the man, as he lived, toiled, suffered, triumphed, and enjoyed.

The persistence and patience of the Germans, with all their adoration of Goethe, scarcely enable them to wade through the twenty-five hundred pages of Viehoff's *Chronicles of the Poet's Life*. Schäfer's *Biography* is the best one which the Germans possess. Mr. Lewes has confessedly availed himself of these works so far as he could. He has exercised the rare faculty of omitting as well as of selecting details and anecdotes. During a prolonged residence in Weimar, he has gained access to knowledge which neither of his predecessors had obtained.

He wields a facile pen. His style is always sprightly and pleasing. The diffuseness and familiarity of the journalist are sometimes manifest; but we are so accustomed to newspaper rhetoric in these days, that it disturbs the sensitiveness of the majority of readers far less than stately and classical heaviness. Mr. Lewes cherishes an admiration and a love for Goethe, and an earnest sympathy with his views of life, which contribute in an eminent degree to the success of the biography. Even in those portions of the poet's life for which most of his friends have thought it best to apologize, he finds little to disapprove and nothing to censure. Not that he conceals or misrepresents the facts. On the contrary, because he believes that the facts are not discreditable to Goethe, because his ethics are like those of his hero, he states them with perfect frankness and fairness. He thinks that the memory of Goethe will not suffer from a truthful picture of his life. Hence, we say, is a peculiar value in the book. An enemy exaggerates one's faults. A friend is tempted to palliate and disguise them. But an admirer, who believes that the alleged offences are not really grave derelictions from duty, fears not to tell the simple truth. Utterly as we dis-



agree with Mr. Lewes in his views of many questions of propriety and morality, we thank him for his facts.

The pages which he devotes to the younger days of the poet are especially felicitous and attractive. They should be read in connection with Goethe's own account of his youth, which he gives in his "*Wahrheit und Dichtung*." He wrote those reminiscences when advancing years had sobered the thoughtlessness and tempered the passion of boyhood; and his whole early life passed before his view, softened and mellowed by the lapse of time. Hence it was difficult to know how much of his work was fiction, and how much was truth. Mr. Lewes has with great industry and acuteness shown us how "to read between the lines" of that charming autobiography.

Goethe's "*Truth and Fiction*" gives us minutely the history of his birth and early childhood, of his omnivorous appetite for learning, of his love of fun, and of his ardent passions: it takes us through the moulding and exciting years of his university life at Leipsic and Strasburg; it shows us his artistic and poetical labors and his burning but transient love for Annchen Schönkopf and the winning Frederika of Sesenheim; it reveals to us the first budding of that idea which was afterwards developed in his wonderful poem of *Faust*; it tells us how he created the first great national drama of Germany, the *Göts von Berlichingen*; it paints the "*Storm and Stress Period*," through which he and all the German mind were passing on his return from Strasburg, and the history of the "*Sorrows of the Young Werther*," which so marvellously embodied all the raging and tumultuous feelings of the youthful poet; and it carries us to the very gates of Weimar. But it tells us nothing of the fifty eventful years, during which, in that little city, the author ruled as Monarch of Letters over the whole of Germany.

It is a singular fact, that none of Mr. Lewes's predecessors had given in their biographies of Goethe a full description of the customs of that quaint old capital, with its strange mingling of Boeotian coarseness and Athenian refinement. But he has painted a most spirited picture of the ancient town, with its pleasant walks, its unpretending architecture,

its homely fare, its boisterous revellings, its unscrupulous *liaisons*, and its round of amusements. He has sketched with power and truthfulness the striking group, of which Goethe was really the centre, the fiery but friendly Duke, the reserved but venerated Duchess, the unceremonious and jovial Dowager Amalia, who was not afraid to ride home on a hay-cart with Wieland's coat drawn over her shoulders, and the fascinating Frau von Stein, who for so many years ruled the heart of the poet. And afterwards we see in the circle the Greco-Gallic German and sensuous scholar, Wieland, the manly poet, philosopher, and preacher, Herder, and the rival, the friend, the *alter ego* of Goethe, the sensitive, ardent, struggling Schiller. Literary history nowhere offers so touching a friendship as that of the two great poets. It was so pure, so confiding, so fruitful of good to both, so fortunate for the world. No cloud ever dimmed its brightness, and the day when the earthly tie was severed was one of the few days when the great and calm Goethe gave way to tears. One by one did those who were dearest to his heart fall by his side; the Duchess, Amalia, his mother, his son, the Duke himself, and the old man stood alone, the survivor of his own generation, the Teacher and the Idol of his country. The serene wisdom, the cheerful activity, and the autumnal splendor of his declining years, are even more attractive than the impetuous earnestness, the exuberant passion, and poetic fervor of his younger days.

Mr. Lewes presents an elaborate defence of Goethe's course in abstaining from participation in the political movements against Napoleon. The poet has often been accused of culpable selfishness and want of patriotism, because he did not buckle on his armor against the French oppressor. He "tried to escape from the present, because it was impossible to live in such circumstances and not go mad. He took refuge in Art." He wrote ballads, an essay on Shakspeare, and a volume of his autobiography. As if to remove himself as far as possible from Germany, he devoted himself to the study of Chinese history. He was no republican in the technical sense of the term. He looked to individual and inward culture as the only hope for the progress of the race.

He thought that there was no peculiar charm in a republican form of government, which insured happiness to the people. He also had no confidence in the power of the Germans to expel the French troops. He was a scholar rather than a statesman, although he had so long held office in the Ducal Council, and he was already past the age of that enthusiasm which never despairs of success. It is not, then, strange that he did not cherish the hopes of the ardent youth who finally aroused and rescued their land. But he lamented the dissensions of his countrymen, which rendered unity of action impossible, and doomed the nation to a position of inferiority. He says:

I have often felt a bitter pain at the thought that the German people, so honorable as individuals, should be so miserable as a whole.

In his opinion, the only remedy was this:

Let every one, according to his talents, according to his tendencies, and according to his position, *do his utmost to increase the culture and development of the people*, to strengthen and widen it on all sides, that the people may not lag behind other people, but may become competent for every great action when the day of its glories arrives.

If his theory was that of a poet rather than that of a statesman, shall we blame him for adhering to what he believed, and for being a poet rather than a statesman?

Mr. Lewes has displayed signal ability in the chapters which he devotes to the politics and the religion of Goethe. Volumes have been written upon the religious views of the great German. Irreconcilable expressions from his works have been cited, and their meaning exaggerated to prove now that he was a sceptic, and now a pietist, now a spinozist, and now a Christian.

The contradictory passages, which are quoted, are the truthful pictures of his mind in its varied moods. He had naturally strong religious sentiments. We see him as a child erecting an altar, and offering sacrifices to God. His heart was reverent, but his clear intellect burned to pierce into the very essence of things. It was baffled by those unsolved problems which have shaken the faith of so many a man, whose heart had not the power to bid his mind bow down in lowliness before the mysteries of God. Therefore at times



it plunged into scepticism, and then his natural hatred of hypocrisy and cant poured forth the most withering invectives against churches and priests. His imagination was of that class which is charmed by the sensuous philosophy of the Greeks—and Pantheism irresistibly allured him by its charms. Now his heart prompted utterances which were filled with Christian devotion. Again his intellect urged him to indulge in a scornfulness and sarcasm which we look for only in the school of Voltaire; at another time his imagination revelled in the beauties of Grecian fiction, which has captivated many a poet and dreamer. It would seem, from his conversations with Eckermann, that the spotless character of Christ and the purity of His teachings impressed him with a new power, as his life was drawing to a close. Of all his memorable words, those which breathed most of the Christian spirit fell from his lips in the days of his richest experience and his ripest wisdom.

Goethe has long since been tried and condemned by women for his heartless treatment of their sex. Mr. Lewes gives us very full descriptions of his relations to his Gretchens, and Katchens, and Lottchens, and shows very clearly that he was no worse than his age. It is true he ought to have been better than his age; and after all the palliations of his conduct have been offered, we fear that too much will be found recorded against him. It is certain that he was deeply culpable in so long postponing his marriage with Christiana Vulpius. That is the darkest stain upon his character; and nowhere does Mr. Lewes' theory of morals appear in so questionable a form as in his comments on that unfortunate history. Bitterly indeed did Goethe suffer in after years from the coarseness and vice of the woman whose youthful beauty and freshness had promised so bright a life; and if any expiation on earth could atone for his fault, his patience and kindness in all the trying scenes of her latter days would have wiped away forever the remembrance of the past. Let them, at least, not be entirely forgotten in sweeping denunciations.

He has often been stigmatized as cold and selfish. His natural bearing was dignified and reserved. His personal presence was imposing. A strong resemblance was traced

between his countenance and that of the ancient busts of Jupiter. He was often called "the godlike." His manly and almost imperial air was often regarded as haughtiness and vanity. It should be remembered that he was idolized throughout his whole life. When a boy he was a prodigy; when a student he was the companion and the rival of distinguished authors; and when he was a man, monarchs felt honored by his presence. His life was a succession of triumphs; and when at last he sank to rest, like the western sun, the whole world was gazing on his departing glory. It were strange indeed if he had not sometimes been flushed by his victories. A thousand jealous scribblers were ever attacking his fame, and he could not but look on them sometimes with scorn and contempt. When gaping travellers made their way into his parlor with the same curiosity which led them to visit the bears at Berne, and the giraffes at the *Jardin des Plantes*, they were often made to feel that their presence was intrusive and annoying.

But he showed a tenderness and warmth of affection for his chosen friends, which bound them indissolubly to his heart. He had such a marvellous power of "personal magnetism" that he may have seemed to be drawing all his friends to himself, rather than to be lavishing on them the offerings of sincere attachment. But he reciprocated every kindly feeling of those whom he really loved; and more than once his enemies were conquered by his spirit of forbearance and forgiveness. His sympathy was ever ready to cheer deserving and struggling genius; his hand was ever open to suffering and want, and unseen charities flowed from him to the hearts and homes of more than one, whose face he had never seen.

Mr. Lewes has devoted many chapters to the history and criticism of Goethe's literary and scientific labors. We do not propose to follow him through those at present. In the main we approve of the spirit in which he has performed this difficult part of his work, though we should dissent from many of his explanations. We believe, however, that nowhere, except in Goethe's works themselves, can one obtain so correct an idea of their real worth as in these reviews by Mr. Lewes and in the Essays of Carlyle.

While inviting the young and earnest scholar to study the Life and Works of the great German Poet, we cannot forget that one is often tempted to the gravest errors by many of the modern criticisms on those men of genius who, like Goethe, disregarded the conventional usages of their time, and openly transgressed the laws of morality. There are writers who dare to maintain that nothing is forbidden to men of transcendent intellect, that it is the prerogative of great minds to override the moral law, and so to be a law unto themselves. A noted French play represents a young woman as running a long career of vice, and yet as loving, through every trial and vicissitude, the youth who had first won her heart. And, on her death-bed, she is told in words which comprise the very essence of popular feeling at Paris, "Much shall be forgiven thee, because much hast thou loved—this young man." So do our genius-worshippers exclaim, "All shall be forgiven thee, because thou hast known much!" As if the genius which pierces into the secrets of unknown worlds, were not bidden by God to be like the veriest child before the majesty of the Law! as if the boy with the light of the feeblest intellect, and the Poet who dwells among the stars, were not to be judged by the same great and impartial statute, "To whom much is given, of him much will be required."

Moreover, Genius is never so exalted as when it humbleth itself. Its vision is never so clear and so keen as when it searches for Truth, with the desire to embrace it. The highest Greatness and the highest Beauty must always co-exist with the highest Goodness. It is strange that these truths have been often disputed. Well-known writers have contended that genius is dependent for the clearness of its intuitions and perceptions on no moral quality except that of courage. We deem this an error of the most serious nature. It ignores the highest functions of conscience. Its falsity is shown by the most common facts. Does not he who continually disregards the truths which his mind reveals, soon lose the power of clearly perceiving those truths? The career of every criminal is luminous with this teaching. Where is the proof that genius is exempted from this law?



The intellect cannot live in the clear sunlight of heaven, while the conscience is covered with clouds. Man's nature is not a duality, one part of which lives independently of the other. His mind and his moral nature act and react upon each other incessantly. It is true that some bad men have been men of lofty genius. But all the analogies of our being show that they might have attained to sublimer heights, if they had not been fettered and depressed by their burdensome vices. A polluted moral nature must ever dim the eye of Intellect. Those who study the mysteries of the universe merely as *dilettanti*, never achieve the highest results. The spirit of the command, "Seek and ye shall find," which is given to all searchers after Truth, is that they seek for it with their might, to supply their spiritual wants. Those who knock at the gates of the great and unexplored Realm of Eternal Beauty and Verity, must desire with reverent and thirsting hearts to make their lives a sacrifice to the Giver of all Beauty and Verity.

Some have affirmed that a bad man may enforce the truth in his writings even more effectually than a good man. As the witness who states facts injurious to himself is more reliable than a person whose testimony favors his peculiar interests, so, it is claimed, a writer, who acknowledges and praises a virtue which he never has exercised, does really commend it more strongly than the author, who shows its beauty and power in all his actions and thoughts. The answer to this has already been implied. Our ability to proclaim and enforce a truth will always depend primarily on our ability to perceive it. We cannot describe to others what we cannot see ourselves. Now, moral errors do becloud the mind, and diminish the clearness of our perceptions, and so necessarily impair or destroy the value of our testimony to those truths, which can be perfectly cognized only by sound and healthy minds. Moreover, in order to impress a truth on the world, we must not only see it in its true relations, but we must feel its power in the depths of our heart. If it does not infuse itself into our very nature, if its spirit does not breathe forth in every act, our loftiest eloquence is only like the hollow declamation of an actor. Faith is essential to

any great deed. It must be not merely an intellectual belief, but an earnest, heartfelt, active Faith. The testimony of the humblest peasant to the truth, for which he battles consistently in all his daily life, does more to engrave it on the hearts of men than the polished praises of a score of Popes and Byrons and Moores.

Other questions are suggested by reading the *Life* of the writer of the *Elective Affinities*, the *Roman Elegies*, and *Wilhelm Meister*. Is an author entirely unrestricted in his choice of themes? Is the artist to paint everything with rigorous fidelity to the original? We think that he is required by æsthetic and by moral laws to exercise a severe taste, both in the choice and in the treatment of his subjects. Every pure and worthy artist is guided by this principle. Certain scenes are not fitted for the painter. Salvator Rosa has given us a Prometheus Bound, with such startling truthfulness that every one turns away from the picture with a shudder. The pencil was never intended to supplant the scalpel. Though the scenes in a dissecting-room were depicted with the minutest accuracy by the hand of the greatest master, they would never belong to the trophies of the Fine Arts. These minister to one of our highest wants, the desire for the Beautiful. If Art fulfils the high and holy purposes for which she was given, she never panders to our grosser appetites by depicting the coarse, the vulgar, and the sensual; but she holds before us forms of unfading beauty and imperishable worth. If she descends from her lofty work, she forfeits her legitimate influence and glory, and, shorn of her chiefest splendor, consigns herself to contempt.

If the Poet and the Novelist claim the title of Artist, (and we cheerfully accord it to them,) they must conform to the rules of Art. They are not to picture scenes which offend natural delicacy and elevated taste. If they descend to such employment, they offend no less against the laws of *Æsthetics* than against the laws of moral propriety. It is not true that because the Artist is not an advocate, he is bound to represent whatever he sees. No artist acts consistently on such a theory. Every one exercises a choice, and takes those subjects which best suit his purpose. Life is not

long enough to reproduce on canvas or in poetry, the whole boundless world. A selection from its treasures must be made. Now, what shall guide the artist, whether he be Painter, Sculptor, Poet or Novelist, in determining on his theme? Surely the laws of æsthetics; and they require whatever is highest and purest in beauty. In aiming for the noblest æsthetic triumphs, the artist will necessarily obey the highest impulses of his moral nature.

For if beauty in its essence and perfection be not goodness, they are inseparably allied, and we cannot enjoy the companionship of the one, without catching something of the spirit of her Divine attendant.

But must we be restrained by the same limitations in the treatment of our subject as in the choice of it—must we not paint Life as we find it? Alas! that is impossible. The most ardent disciples of the pre-Raphaelite school cannot represent every leaf and every spire of grass. And, again, every artist tinges his work with his own subjectivity. The great portrait painter lends something of his greatness to the most insignificant man whom he paints. Often the picture has more of the master than of the subject. All representation is in one sense ideal, it partakes of the nature of the artist. It gives us the object as seen or conceived by one man, whose perceptions may be more or less true than those of his neighbor. We cannot, then, attempt to represent everything. We cannot represent what we do attempt precisely as it is in its objectivity. Therefore it is no excuse for these, who choose vulgar and repulsive scenes, that they are obliged to paint the world as it is. Art makes no such absurd claims upon its disciples. It does not ask them to paint the whole, but only such parts as will most successfully minister to the desires of our better nature.

The authority of this law within certain limits is tacitly acknowledged by those who remonstrate most strongly against its wider application. The uninteresting and unessential is dropped from every picture. The broad oaths and vile expressions of many a character are omitted. If literal adherence to the truth is demanded, why not retain them all? But here as everywhere, "the letter killeth, the spirit giveth



life." All the truthfulness which can fairly be asked of art is secured without descending to those disgusting details; and all the higher ends of art are gained, which could never be reached by copying with Chinese fidelity the unimportant or the repulsive. We insist only on a universal conformity to the principle, which artistic instinct prompts every tyro to respect in his earliest attempts at representation.

Let it not be understood that we desire to fill the world with stories of good boys and girls, who lived and died without an impulse or passion. They would be only caricatures of virtue, and would be utterly wanting in beauty. Nor would we have all poems and novels written expressly to "point a moral." For art is not primarily didactic. If it ever teaches, it is because it pleases. It does not please expressly in order to teach. But we ask the artist to imbue his works with that spirit of transcendent beauty, which ever distinctly recognizes the sublime and unchangeable worth of all moral excellence. Let him remember the difference between errors with their consequences, and flagrant vice with its scenes of unblushing and polluting sensuality. Let him give us indeed pictures from Life with its mingled woof of good and evil, its alternations of clouds and sunshine, of tears and smiles. But do we need the vile and degrading sallies of wit, which are bandied about in the coulisses of a second-rate theatre? Must we witness the agonies of ungratified lust, and the burnings of unhallowed desire? Shall we pass the night in the stench of gamblers' hells? Must the Muse lend her melodious voice to utter those thoughts which none dares to utter in prose? Must her robes be used to adorn and to veil those vices which cannot come forth to the sun in their nakedness? Did she descend from above to defile her train in the mire of impurity, and to prostitute herself to sensual passion, or to ravish our ears with heavenly harmonies, and kindle in our souls the burning desire for purer and loftier songs than those of earth? Surely if Art be heaven-born, let her breathe forth something of the spirit of her celestial home. Let her show by the blessings which bloom on her path, that she is a heavenly visitant.

We know that the necessity for discussions like these

bespeaks a degenerate age. This endless disputation about the nature and claims of genius is a certain proof that we have no genius. We are continually debating whether genius is conscious of its efforts, whether genius works or plays, whether genius is amenable to ordinary moral laws, or only to a transcendental code of its own, and whether genius is not an object of worship as the highest revelation of divinity. When men are reasoning about passion, and analyzing its motives, it is certain that they are not in passion. When men write histories of philosophy, the age of earnest philosophizing is past. When poets are busy in seeking for Shakspeare's and Dante's sources of power, they are never singing such lays as those of Shakspeare and Dante. The age of criticism is near the age of original productiveness. Genius has no element of selfishness; and selfishness always underlies excessive introspection. Real genius does not waste its time and strength in searching for the essence of itself, and in proclaiming its idiosyncrasies to the world, but it brings forth, it produces, it does its work while the day lasts. Vainly do we strive with our wings of wax to follow its lofty and natural flight.

While, then, we confess that this is an age of criticism, and not of original thought, let us see that our principles of investigation are founded upon truth. While our ears are filled with vague and sounding words about the prerogatives of genius, let us remember that the highest beauty and the highest goodness dwell together forever in the heavens.

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## ART V.—RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT GREEKS.

THE east is the native land of religion, whence a perpetual exodus has continuously advanced towards the west. As the sun in the beginning, so truth and life first shone from the orient; and the march of civilization has ever since been in the direction of that great orb.

It would be a hopeless task to trace with accuracy the theology of the earliest periods, buried as it is under a mass of allegory and fable, which cannot now be removed. Yet there are indications of a purer morality, and a more worthy faith, than is portrayed in the anthropomorphic mythology of the Hesiodic and Homeric poems. Inachus is supposed to have migrated from the Asian shore about the same time the Israelites entered Egypt. Then, the worship prevalent among the Nomadic tribes of Asia, according to Job, was that of one almighty Creator, typified by, and already half confounded with light, either the sun or other celestial bodies. Plato speaks vaguely of the divine unity, and Aristotle more distinctly avers that "it was an ancient saying received by all from their ancestors, that all things exist by and through the power of God, who being one was known by many names according to his modes of manifestation."

Kailas was a mountain in Asia, from the lofty terraces of which the ancestors of the Greeks descended, bringing with them to Hellas a memento of their origin in the word *koilon*, and illustrating their hereditary theology by going for congenial worship to the loftiest shrines. The best authority tells us that they were "exceedingly religious," a fact which even their grossest errors confirm. Endowed with the most acute and active sensibilities, the Greek sought to satisfy the ardent aspirations of his devout spirit; he even yearned to be himself enrolled among the deified heroes whom his faith and imagination had exalted to the dazzling halls of Olympus. This general impulse may be illustrated by particular examples, as in the subtle Themistocles, and majestic Pericles,



who placidly hailed in worship traditions discarded by the historic mind as transparent fictions. So powerful and all-pervading was the religiousness of the cultivated Greeks, that the same judgment which so profoundly harmonized with the severe grandeur of the Olympian Jove, enthroned by Phidias amid the marshalled columns of the national temple, bowed to the legend of Aphrodite, the foam-born Queen of Love. Heroism and piety were perpetually invigorated at costly fanes; and how deeply the spirit of worship, and belief in retribution, were impressed upon the most powerful intellect, is shown by the awful apostrophe of Demosthenes to the heroes who fell at Marathon, and the breathless attention which then absorbed the very soul of the Athenian.

In the land of Ham nothing was nobler than a few dull emblems of thought, sitting on a lotus leaf, immersed in the contemplation of their own divinity, or fierce warrior-deities, Molochs, Baals, or Saturns, while the classic west deified the sentiments of the human mind; and, though steeped in viciousness, yet represented as beings presiding over nature in beautiful and commanding forms. A potent spell of fascination dwelt in the mere abstractions of pagan thought embodied in a Hebe, Venus, or Minerva; and, false as were the spiritual views of their authors, they exercised a charm of imagination which still speaks to more enlightened intellects, and evokes sad regrets from holier hearts. The province of Shem was faith, and not philosophy. His descendants were never successful in dialectics, and the best of them under the old dispensation only stated the matter of their belief, but never undertook to prove it. When Job attempted religious argumentation, and would justify the ways of God to man by a process of theodicean philosophy, he acknowledged his failure by avowing the incomprehensibility of human destinies. And when the pious and philosophic Ecclesiastes attempted to argue on rationalistic principles, he fell into inextricable doubt, and could resist despair only by implicit submission to the Word vouchsafed from heaven, "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." Without anticipating the designs of Providence, we think with inexpressible delight of the last and best expres-

sion of Jewish faith united to Japhetic reason, and happily blended together in the splendors of an infinitely loftier wisdom to enlighten mankind.

The functions of humanity are of a social nature; they merge in the whole species, and have religion for their foundation and centre. If absolute isolation were possible to man, it would virtually nullify his existence. Only societies act in and upon the world, with religion for their bond and protection. Among the nations which have shared in the work of progress accomplished hitherto, each has exerted an influence by some characteristic feature, some special function in the general advance. In addition to the literature, art, science, and philosophy of the Greeks, we should carefully note the great civilizing might which dwelt in their religion. This was felt by them to be an infinite and universal necessity. Without it, the social state is impossible, since the nature of man demands active progress under a moral law too exalted to emanate from human will. It must be divinely ordained, and in a way which clearly indicates the means and end of human perfection. That alone can create and proclaim the legitimate end of human activity, at the same time it becomes synonymous with religious morality.

The ideas which obtain among different nations respecting their own creation, are usually much like themselves. Scandinavians suppose that they sprang from dense forests on their hills, the Libyans from the sands of their native deserts, while the Egyptians conceived themselves to have arisen from the mud of the Nile. But the cheerful and active Greek associated his origin with the grasshopper, and went singing on his agile way. A kindred diversity exists in the choice made by nations as to the objects to be adored. The Egyptians deified water, the Phrygians earth, the Assyrians air, and the Persians fire. But the Greek, impelled by nobler instincts, went beyond grosser natures and deified himself. The mighty conclave shining round the resplendent heights of Olympus, was only the counterpart of a vast congregation worshipping below. As Amon or Osiris presides among the deities of a lower grade, Pan, with the music of his pipe, directs the chorus of the constellations, and Zeus leads the

solemn procession of celestial troops in the astronomical theology of the Pythagoreans. The apotheosis of Orpheus, with his harp in their scientific heavens, is a starry record of oriental worship sublimated by the devout intellect of Greece. The nations of antiquity believed that their ancestors dwelt closely allied to the gods, or were gods themselves. Cadmus and Cecrops were half human, half divine. The Greeks inherited many cosmogonical legends from the Hindoos, out of which was composed the theogony of Hesiod. Thebes, rising to the sound of Amphion's lyre, was the world awakening at the music of the shell of Vishnou. Conflicting Centaurs and Lapithæ, Titans and giants, are supposed to represent the elemental discord out of which arose the stability and harmony of nature.

The great heroes of India became the chief gods of Greece; so that their mythology was not a pure invention, but rested on a historical basis. A record of the introduction of the Lamaic worship into north-eastern Hellas, is distinctly preserved in the earliest religious annals. The famous moralist, Pythagoras, was the special devotee and professor of eastern doctrines, and, under their inspiration, established a brotherhood strictly devotional, and with observances of monastic sanctity. Grote speaks of this great preacher to the Grecian race in the following terms :

In his prominent vocation, analogous to that of Epimenides, Orpheus, or Melampus, he appears as the revealer of a mode of life calculated to raise his disciples above the level of mankind, and to recommend them to the favor of the gods; the Pythagorean life, like the Orphic life, being intended as the exclusive prerogative of the brotherhood, approached only by probation and initiatory ceremonies, which were adapted to select enthusiasts, rather than to an indiscriminate crowd, and exacting active mental devotion to the master.

Tradition commemorates a wonderful reformation produced by this stern religionist, in different lands. The effect produced among the Crotoniates by the illustrious missionary of morality is indicated by the recorded fact, that two thousand persons were converted under his first discourse. The Supreme Council were so penetrated with the noble powers of the Lamaic apostle, that they offered him the exalted post of their President, and placed at the head of the religious female processions, his wife and daughter.



The religion of the Greeks was the deification of the faculties and affections of man. Human character and personality preponderated therein, but it was neither inert nor wanting in intellect. The passionless, immovable deities of Egypt and Persia were superseded by the active and powerful hierarchy of Olympus. Free and independent, they were presided over by the great conqueror of those blind and deaf gods of necessity, who had reigned absolutely over all the ancient east. Under this new dispensation, the various forces of nature were emancipated and endowed with the affections, and subjected to the weaknesses of mortal beings. Fountains, rivers, trees, forests, mountains, rose into objects of adoration, under the form of nymphs, goddesses, and gods. Social existence was elevated to a corresponding degree, by the removal of castes, and the sacerdotal despotisms which had so long impeded the progress of democratic principles in individual and social life. Preceding nations of lively sensibility had revered as deities single rays of the Divine Being separated from their great centre; but the polytheism which prevailed over adolescent men, appeared in Hellas invested with a purer majesty. Oriental polytheism desecrated its altars and temples with images of deformity; but the west conceived a nobler symbol of divinity, when the Greek created God in his own image, and seemed to inhale life-giving breath while he worshipped in the midst of every phenomenon that could refine his taste or stimulate his imagination. This was utterly inadequate to the attainment of the great end of spiritual existence: but one important step in paganism was gained; natural religion, which had before been absorbed in the immeasurableableness of the formless infinite, became fixed to the eye under the limitations of a cognizable form, eminently human but suggestive of the divine. Thus, religion produced ideality in art, and art fostered enthusiasm in religion. The beauty and dignity of many altar-statues appeared to have descended from a higher sphere, and commanded the reverence due to beings of celestial birth. The earthly was so blended with the heavenly, and visibly presented, that Plato looked upon the harmony as something complete, and most ennobling in its power of assimilation.

In all the public enterprises and festal assemblies of the Greeks, a high religious tone was present, which paid homage only to the exalted and the beautiful. They were of the earth, earthy; but it is impossible not to look back with respect upon that people whose whole civilization was imbued with a spirit of renunciation, sublime self-sacrifice, and beneficent deeds. The magical splendor which yet pours about them, in the depth of that old world, after so many centuries, is nothing else than the reflection of their purer worship and nobler stamp of character. Of all the states, Athens, in this regard, as in every other, was by far the noblest. Sparta, it is true, appreciated highly the blessings of liberty, and was not only content by a joyless existence to purchase this, but delighted even to sacrifice life for its preservation. But the refined capital of Minerva went beyond the severe law which makes a useful slave, as one would harden a growth of oak; she elicited perfume from the fairest bloom of the soul, wherein the moral man was made to unfold in the development of a higher freedom. The genius of the Greek was as profoundly devotional as it was emulative. To his sensitive imagination, the fair objects of nature became invested with a living personality; day and night presented engrossing deities, while he adored the golden-haired Phœbus, or the silvery Artemis. Actuated by a glowing fancy, material creation seemed spiritualized, and each agreeable retreat was the habitation of a god. Naiads in the fountains; Dryads in the groves; Fawns, Satyrs, and Oreads on the mountains, indissolubly associated sublunary scenes with intelligent beings.

The dawn of civilization has ever been confined to those who were entrusted with the care of sacred ceremonies, and who devoted their exclusive knowledge to the support of their religion. In the beginning all contemplation was religious: the whole universe was esteemed divine, and it was to the solving of this problem that the first efforts of mind were given. "Whence and who am I?" are the first questions which occur to Brama, as represented in Hindoo theology, when he awakens to conscious being amidst the expanse of waters. But the early Greek sages surveyed nature with the more penetrating glance of a Lynceus or At-

las, who saw down into the ocean depths. There were no distinct astronomy, history, philosophy, or theology; there was but one mental exercise, whose results were called "Wisdom." It was this personification that Solomon saw standing alone with God before the creation. All mythologies may, in one sense, claim to rank as truths, inasmuch as they, in fact, represent what once existed as mental conceptions. On this principle the Grecian dogmas, though in reality absurdities, are most worthy of attention, because they are expressed in the purest forms. Their conceptions of superhuman beings, were products of the devotional sentiment. Nature was to them a perpetually flowing fountain, whose pellucid waters mirrored earth and sky, like the stream in which Narcissus was dazzled by the reflection of his own image, and beneath whose surface he bent in sadness, and was melted into its transparent depths.

Efforts to deify the beautiful existed among the Hindoos and Hebrews, as well as among the Greeks; but in the former races, a wish to blend in one expression a great variety of theological ideas obliterated elegance, and rendered the idols of Egypt and India elaborate metaphysical enigmas, a sculptured library of symbols instead of an attractive gallery of religious art. But in Greece, the development of sacred imagery fell into the hands of masters in whom the character of priest was subordinate to that of artist; from the servant Art became the mistress, the teacher, even the institutor of the religion in whose aid she had been employed, and the works so produced were received as fresh revelations from heaven.

Poets gave a local habitation to the gods, and were the first teachers of religion. With the eye of taste, and impelled by sentimental reverence, they people the hills and groves, glens and rivers, with imaginary beings. Much of the Homeric theology is of Egyptian parentage, but in his hands all borrowed material was greatly improved. Mere personification of natural powers became moral agents; and instead of being represented under disgusting images, they became models of human beauty, elegance, and majesty. The inspired bards, though blind without, were full of eyes within, and,



Acteon-like, gazed on Nature's naked loveliness through the light of their illumined souls. To these poet-priests of nature, like Orpheus or Eumolpus, was ascribed the first religious establishment, as well as the first practical compositions. The commencement of literature was not a scheme contrived to win the savage to civilization ; it was the wild and spontaneous outburst of religious enthusiasm. If powerful institutions are always ascribed to distinguished men only, it is simply because that the full light of common thoughts is never condensed, and vividly set forth but by that exalted order of genius which is the rarest of gifts. Minds of the finest tone express the most comprehensive doctrines, as the lyre of Orpheus and the pipe of Silenus sung how heaven and earth rose out of chaos. Atlas taught respecting men and beasts, tempestuous elements, and the eclipses and irregularities of the heavenly bodies. The laws of Menu, like those of Moses, begin with cosmogony ; and Niebuhr has shown that the history of the Etruscans, like that of the Brahmins and Chaldeans, is contained in an astronomico-theological outline, embracing the whole course of time.

Evidently the first colonizers of Greece brought with them much of the simple faith and worship recorded in the Hebrew writings. A stone or the trunk of a tree was set up for a memorial, and, according to the alarm that had been felt, or the deliverance experienced, on some spot thereby sanctified worship was offered to that great Being whose rule all acknowledged, but whose name none ventured to pronounce. Doubtless the excess of awe, if no more mundane influence, generated superstition ; as the vow of Jephtha had its parallel in the almost cotemporaneous sacrifice of Iphigenia and of Polyxena. It was this barbarous race that the polished and erudite traveller, Orpheus, endeavored to civilize. Perhaps, as in later times, he imagined that hidden doctrines would best improve the higher classes, while the minds of the vulgar would be easier won by fables, and weaned from gloomy superstitions by the worship of Divine benevolence, manifested in the varied products and powers of nature. The attempt, however, failed, and the grossness of depraved perceptions converted those different manifestations into separate

deities, so that different localities and cities came to have their tutelary stone, or wooden idol, or marble statue. The temple was built on the spot hallowed by devotion, as at Bethel; but in a subsequent age, the impulse of the original consecration was no longer felt, and its intent was forgotten. The gorgeous fane, and the fascinating image therein, became objects of degenerate worship; the source of profit to a mercenary priesthood, and of deterioration to the most intellectual and moral of mankind.

Monuments were early erected in grateful commemoration of religious events, as the hill of stones by Jacob and Laban; or to gratify secular ambition, as was exemplified in the Tower of Babel. In Greece, when the pioneers were feeble, the first settlers chose some hill readily defensible; and having fortified the summit as the first space to be occupied, they proceeded to build a taphos, or temple, for the divinity. Such was the origin of Athens. The enclosed city was called Cecropia, from Cecrops, it is said, who first founded the State, and his was the first place of worship for the original inhabitants. Others interpret Acropolis to mean "height of the city," which, in this instance, was accessible only on the western side, through the Propylæa, and was crowned by that shrine of truth and wisdom, the Parthenon. Religious instincts have ever sought the vast solitudes of untainted nature, or the open heights of the mighty temple of the great God, whereon the pure spirit of love reigns and smiles over all. Pilgrimages were made to the oaks of Mamre, near Hebron, from the days of Abraham; and the nations surrounding the divinely-favored tribes, conspired to attach the idea of veneration to rivers and fountains, and were accustomed not only to dedicate trees and groves to their deities, but even to sacrifice on high mountains: customs which were practiced by the Jews themselves, previous to the building of Solomon's temple. The beginning of wisdom was in the wilds of Asia, and it was there that the God of nature implanted grand ideas in the minds of shepherds meditating on those antique eminences, teaching them to wonder and adore.

In Greece there was no hereditary priesthood, as in Egypt. The right of presiding at public sacrifices pertained to the

highest civil officer, and probably the head of each family was also its ecclesiastic; but there was no priestly combination with secular power, and no national creed. Nestor at home conducts religious service, aided by his sons; and Achilles offers sacrifice to the manes of Patroclus. Pausanias informs us that early in Arcadia, the twelve gods were worshipped under the forms of rude stones; and before Dædalus the statues had eyes nearly shut, legs close together, and the arms scarcely detached from the body; but as the correlative arts and sciences improved, sculpture, like the civilization it expressed, acquired freedom, proportion, and natural action. Altars were commonly erected in the open air, and propitiatory offerings most frequently smoked before Zeus, Poseidon, Athene, and Apollo. The first three of these are better known under their Latin designations of Jupiter, Neptune, and Minerva. The supremacy of the first over all inferior deities is decisively marked. His own declaration, according to Homer, is at the same time the most affirmative on this point, and a curious indication of the social condition of the gods. Says the Supreme:

If I catch any one of you helping the Trojans or the Greeks, he shall either make his escape to Olympus disgraced and bruised, or else I will seize him, and throw him into Tartarus. Then you shall know my supremacy in power. Come now, make the trial; hang a gold chain from heaven, and fasten yourselves at the end of it, all of you, gods and goddesses: you cannot pull Zeus down, but, whenever I please, I can pull you up with the earth and the sea, wind the chain round Olympus, and then you would all dangle in the air.

According to Herodotus, the Egyptians invented twelve gods, which were imported into Greece. These were doubtless of the lowest order of merit, but of sufficient importance to justify the report that the worship of stone images originated in the east. Venus was first adored at Paphos under the form of an *aërolite*, fallen from heaven. It was by such circumstances that a special sanctity was conferred upon particular localities. The artistic merit of the idols was vastly improved, but still the theology of the Greeks remained purely anthropomorphous, the human form being to them the paragon of excellence. But to his whole intellectual



being this was a representative, the embodiment, and very identity of divinity. All the susceptibilities of his immortal nature, full of the endless enthusiasms respecting everything splendid, so that in the estimation of an apostle he was "very religious," were exercised to refine this image, and exalt it. Living he did this, and dying he looked beyond the grave, but to a world of men, sublimated indeed, but still with human passions, and capable of human enjoyments. He turned with fond desire towards the radiance of the descending sun, which with genial glories seemed wooing him to another and purer earth. The great ocean stream severed the world of debasing toil from the bright sphere of not less active but nobler pursuits; and on that western shore he anticipated fairer as well as more abundant fruits, than the east might behold. The great national altar on the Acropolis was exterior to the temple and fronted the setting sun.

Egyptian worship was so closely allied to that of India, that when the sepoy in Sir Ralph Abercrombie's expedition entered the ancient temples in the valley of the Nile, they immediately asserted that their own divinities were discovered upon the walls, and worshipped them accordingly. But no such identity ever existed with the purer forms of the west. All the gods of Hellenic Greeks, from Jupiter down to Hercules, were the ancestors of the primitive Pelasgic tribes which existed in Asia Minor, Crete, and the islands of the Archipelago, but seldom in Greece itself. At its intellectual and moral centre, Egyptian fetichism had some influence, on the one hand, and Indo-Germanic metaphysics a good deal, on the other; still the chief element in Greek mythology was hero-worship, made as unexceptionable as it could be by a people whose religion mainly consisted in ancestral adoration. True, their whole system was a fable and an absurdity; but the puerilities which defaced its beauty were the remnant of a more barbarous state of things upon which they improved, and we may wonder most that they so far emancipated themselves.

Orpheus is said to have come from Thrace, a region of indefinite extent in the estimation of the Greek, and one which was a chief source of the Hellenic sacred rites. Both

the Orphic and Pythagorean doctrines, Herodotus believed to have emanated from Egypt, which would appear to support the fact of a double current of emigration, clearly proved on other grounds. This great religionist was older than Homer, and seems to have exerted a great influence on the civilization of Greece. It is said he accompanied Jason and the other Argonauts on their piratical expedition, that he visited Egypt, and brought thence the doctrine which greatly corrupted the rude but simple theology of primitive times. Many hymns attributed to him are probably spurious, but enough was authentic to the ancients to justify the conclusion that he taught the doctrine of one self-existing God, the maker of all things, and who is present to us in all his works. But this great truth was always somewhat disguised, and grew increasingly fabulous. Cudworth preserves the following specimen: "The origin of the earth was ocean; when the water subsided, mud remained, and from both of these sprang a living creature, a dragon having the head of a lion growing from it, and in the midst, the face of God: by name Hercules or Chronos." By him an immense egg was produced, which being split into two parts, one became the heavens, the other the earth. Heaven and earth mingled, and produced Titans or Giants.

The Delphic oracle occupied a high position in the political and religious government of mankind. It had a powerful influence in moulding the first national confederacy, and was its presiding centre. Both Strabo and Pausanias specially refer to the Amphictyonic league, as being formed for the maintenance of harmony and union among the States which composed it. The original confederacy was greatly enlarged by the Dorian accession; oracular control was thus extended throughout the Peloponnesus, and soon embraced within its influence the entire Grecian world. By this central assimilative and directing power, the mighty republic was happily consummated, and its citizens first termed Hellenes. It was by the peculiarity of its oracular system, even more than by the other traits we have noticed, that the Greek religion was distinguished from that which prevailed in Egypt and the yet remoter east. Based as it was on delusion, it still was a

great improvement upon the preceding, inasmuch as it was presented in a higher character than the mere constitution of nature. According to the Delphic teaching, the supreme Deity was a moral and personal being, actively interesting himself in human affairs, and claiming authority over human volitions. Hence, while the oriental systems displayed only a crowd of mere personifications of natural powers, without moral character or substantial being, the system of the Greeks presented a divine reality for the human mind to embrace; an actual course of providence, and deities palpably real to religious feelings. Amidst a multitude of deformities, the most marked features of the Greek religion stood forth in enhancing, if not with ennobling beauty. The Egyptians worshipped animals, but the Greeks never sank lower than the worship of idealized man. The former were superstitious upon physical objects, their system resting upon a physical deity; but the latter adored a moral deity, and however disastrous superstition ever is, hero-worship was not entirely void of redeeming qualities. It held up ancient worthies for the imitation of successors, rendered their memories motives to excellence, and, by the sublimating power of oracular canonization, exerted a mighty influence in the spheres of political and moral life. Lessons of respect for antiquity, and submission to authority, were constantly inculcated, the effect of which shines clearly in the Grecian character, exemplified in all the tumultuous growth and varied grandeur of her democracy. It was a lofty hero-worship, fostered by their sacred system, which fortified the sentiments of reverence and subordination in the popular mind, and supplied at once motive and restraint in every sphere of secular and religious life. Their approximation to truth took the boldest form of superstition, and indicates the working of a higher order of mind than had yet appeared. The Greeks were a nation of poets and philosophers as acutely refined in understanding as they were tender of heart; and, since we still turn their writings to a moral account, our sympathy for the worth they attained should furnish some degree of apology for the errors which they unfortunately embraced. The reality and firmness of their belief in divination was tested, for example



at Plataea, when the Greeks sustained the charge of the Persian cavalry, and "because the victims were not favorable, there fell of them at that time very many, and far more were wounded." And whether the national fleet should risk a battle at Salamis, was determined in council by the appearance of an owl. How strange that when courage and wisdom had failed to persuade, superstition saved the liberties of the world! It is painful to contemplate the human mind debased by such childish absurdities, commingled with traits so fair and excellences so great. Still, despite all its fraud and folly, the religion of Greece contained much that was both admirable in morality and profound in speculation. Hooker remarks, "The right conceit that they had, that to perjury vengeance is due, was not without good effect, as touching the course of their lives."

The tragic genius of Æschylus was imbued with religious sentiment, and found the fittest material in the simple and sublime traditions of his forefathers. He has handed down to our days clear memorials of the still popular faith, in his noble drama of *Prometheus Bound*; wherein he represents Jupiter as sending to beg from the tortured prophet a revelation of the yet future decrees of destiny. This mythical benefactor, the most significant of ancient religious fables, was a Japhetide, who brought his celestial fire from the remote east to man. Prometheus indignantly refuses to gratify the curiosity of his oppressor, and utters severe invectives against the *new* power of Jove. He alludes to wars in which he had himself assisted him, leads us back to the first colonization of Greece, and leaves us justly to conclude that the nature-worship of Orpheus had been mixed up with hero-worship also, and that the Jupiter of the poets was little better than a Cretan pirate, who, with his associates, drove out the Asian chief, already beginning to civilize the people, and banished him to the wild regions of the Caucasus. The several centuries which transpired between Prometheus and Hesiod was a period long enough in legendary times to invest heroes, or benefactors of the human race, with supernatural attributes. Æschylus set forth a yet sublimer article of Athenian belief, when he represented the two powers, immovable des-

tiny and human consciousness, weighing the motives of the son of Agamemnon, and, under the presiding auspices of the goddess of Wisdom, leaving the ultimate decision to the Areopagus. Deified Reason was thus called upon to sit in judgment upon the past, and to proclaim the eternal ways of infinite justice to coming generations. Herodotus, also, in the clear light of Hellenic freedom, recapitulated lapsed centuries, and foretold future destinies, through the prophetic mirror of Nemesis, that clearest reflection of Greek religiousness; and, like his predecessor, pictured the divine drama of eternal law and retribution. Thucydides followed, and became the final prophet of the great struggle of his nation, and her influence in the developments of future time.

Sophocles, of all the dramatists, was the most religious. His whole life was said to be one continual worship, and his writings are redolent of his tender spirit. The *Cedipus Coloneus* was a marked consecration after death. The gods conferred that honor to show that in the terrible example they made of him, it was not personal vengeance, but a salutary admonition designed for the whole human race. That the self-condemned criminal should at last find peace in the grove of the Furies, the very spot from which guilt would instinctively shrink with acutest horror, bears a moral of profound and tranquilizing significancy.

The moral charms of domestic affection in antiquity are depicted by Homer, in what is undoubtedly an embellished, but may have been a real scene. The manly beauty of Hector, the feminine graces of Andromache, and the budding charms of the babe Astyanax, live before us in vivid representation. Such a blending of gentleness and strength is not often seen on earth, as was manifested by him who set aside his burnished armor lest its strange dazzling should frighten his child. Paternal affection indeed sits gracefully on the plumed helmet of this bravest hero of Troy. But not even that can dissuade him from the conscientious discharge of a most comprehensive duty. Neither the entreaties of a wife, the prayers of a father, the tears of a mother, nor his own fondest parental hopes, could divert him from his devotion to country and religion. He knows and feels that inexorable

fate has declared against him, but he bows to the will of the gods with a heroism equalled only by the placid self-denial which silences both inclination and interest in his bosom.

The ancient games were moral in their purpose and influence. Of the great number of athletes who gained prizes thereat, very few became famous in warlike pursuits. Their enthusiasm flowed from a higher and purer source. The vigorous, disinterested, salutary, and heaven-appointed contest, was to the Greeks a thrilling symbol of an exalted life, the struggle through an emulative career of exhausting duties, in order to attain and enjoy, at the goal of consummate glory, the reward of a blissful immortality.

All the stray sibylline leaves of ancient history and legendary faith are inscribed with indications of a moral order of the universe, and encourage the expectation of perpetual progress. Pindar believed that the beginning and end of man were divinely ordained; and while many erudite teachers held to the supremacy of fate, none were ever so foolish as to suppose that accident governed the world.

Socrates was the first to turn speculation from physical nature to man; and his celebrated "demon" announced the birth of conscience into the Grecian world. It was a divine teacher ever present, taking cognizance of the most secret movements of mind and will, and who reproved, restrained, and warned him as to all things everywhere. So far from wondering at his martyrdom, in view of the purity and boldness of his teaching, Mr. Grote very reasonably wonders how such a man should have been allowed to go on teaching so long. No state, he adds, ever showed so much tolerance for differences of opinion as Athens. According to his various writings, we infer that the god of Plato was not an idea simply, but a real being, endowed with supreme intelligence, movement, and life. He was beauty without mixture, and went out of himself to produce man and the world by the effusion of his own goodness. This great pupil of Socratic wisdom was profoundly imbued with that religious sentiment which is the lofty distinction of humanity, and which neither superstition can utterly debase, nor worldliness extinguish. But a feeling alone, however refined, can never



constitute safety in religion. The Republic terminates with a noble discussion on immortality; and if it has been less popular than the *Phædon*, it is because the scenery of it is less startling; but for intrinsic worth it is doubtless entitled to the greatest consideration.

Gross Polytheism was the creed of the multitude; but this was much refined by the moralists. The graces and perfections of the great intelligences that rule the world, under the controlling wisdom and care of the one Omnipotent, were so described in the dialogues of Plato, and by Pythagoreans, as to furnish not only models of perfect beauty to art, but also the most attractive traits of person and character to the various orders of the Grecian hierarchy.

The Greeks felt that the origin of art was divine—since it was the offspring of religion. The first rhythmical expression was a hymn, and the first creations of plastic genius were dedicated to the worship of the godhead. Jupiter, whose awful nod shook the poles, was yet benignant in his majesty, and could smile with bewitching fascination on his daughter Venus. Beauty was universally expressed, whether in the gorgeous sanctuary of their religious worship, or the simplest implement of ordinary use; the heart-rending anguish of the priest Laocoon and his sons, or in the sculptured deity of day himself. In the opinion of Visconti, the Apollo Belvidere is the Deliverer from Evil, as well as God of Light, and was made by Calamis, to be set up at Athens in memory of a plague which had desolated that city. In life the consecrated champion was greeted with the praises of appreciative countrymen; and divine honors followed his decease.

The idea of divine Omniscience seems to have profoundly actuated the Greeks in the execution of all their great religious works. It gave perfection to every part of their edifices, essential and ornamental, and impressed upon each part alike a feeling purely devotional. What escaped the human eye the Deity beheld, and therefore every mass and moulding, frieze and pediment, bas-relief and statue, should be rendered equally worthy of that immortal Being to whom the edifice was consecrated. As fine a finish was bestowed upon the hidden

portions as upon the exposed, as is proved by the fragmentary master-pieces we still possess—the most elaborated features of which were never seen from below when in their original position. The material which Athens employed to eternize her mental conceptions was happily adapted in texture and tone to the end desired. On one side lay the quarries of sparkling Pentilic and veined Carystian; and on the other side, the pearl-like beauty of Megarean; all of which, impregnated by the creative genius of the poets, and obedient to the talismanic touch of the sculptors, came forth from the marble tomb of Attica a new-born progeny stamped with all the lineaments of their noble parent. Thus, as the thought of Homer coalesced with the executive might of Phidias and his associates, the awful gods of his country spread an invincible palladium over the patriotic citizen, and rendered their terror ever present to the eyes of treachery and guilt. If the Sphinx, the Centaur, and Satyr, were sometimes demanded by the legendary element of the ancestral east yet lingering in the national faith, the effort to subjugate the grotesque to the laws of beauty, was no less successful than it was difficult; and twenty centuries have admired the result. The corporate religious crafts of India and Egypt were abandoned; but the divinest element therein was still preserved, and made to cast a hallowed spell over country and home, making each father the high priest of his domestic temple, and planting household gods round every hearth. An all-pervading religious influence was stamped on every rank of character, every region of nature, every type of art, and every department of enterprise. It exalted the dauntless courage of Miltiades, and added energy to the lofty daring of Themistocles, as they were conscious that the gods from Olympus gazed upon them in the fight, and were their guardians, as of old they had been to their ancestors on the plains of Troy.

With a very few exceptional cases, the art of the Greeks is never voluptuous, even in its earthly matter and shape. Under the pious feelings of the maker, as he breathed into it the soul of a lofty enthusiasm, dead material shaped itself into a nature as elevated as the source from which its strength

was derived. And this moral dignity and grace which were born from the artist in his process of creation, communicated themselves in turn to the beholder ; and the consecrated feeling in which the godlike conception was developed, generated an atmosphere of sanctity around it, as manifested divinity is supposed to drive demons away. It was fitting that in the groves of Delphi, Lycurgus should conceive the idea of his laws, and from the mouth of Apollo receive their ratification. All the great and wise legislators of antiquity cultivated an intercourse with the gods, and continued to covet the privilege of their society. The excellence of great works of religious art consists in the principle, that the purity and nobleness with which they were imbued, pass into their admirers ; and thus the serene repose and celestial fervor in which they are conceived are perpetually reproduced so long as the original qualities endure. The earliest poetry was religious, and its spirit migrated through succeeding generations ; and even down to the most degenerate age, perpetuated a delicate moral sense in the judgment, and mostly also in the works of the Greek nation. The refined taste, for which they have always been extolled, was produced entirely by this. Even the wit-intoxicated muse of Aristophanes perpetually maintains a chaste demeanor, and shows on her earnest countenance the moral meaning of her gaiety.

Although the system of Athenian life was deformed by many imperfections, yet never at an earlier period had so much energy, virtue, and beauty been developed ; never was blind force and obdurate will so disciplined and ennobled, as during the century which preceded the death of Socrates. If the early Pythian and Dodonean oracles tended to consolidate national union, the improved wisdom of later philosophers did much to cultivate the citizens. Many a Grecian engarlanded with laurel then adorned the various walks of secular and moral life. It is probable that some were self-deceived, when no unworthy fraud was intended. Vividly conscious of a calling to some great vocation, and seeking in the depths of their own imperfect religiousness for the means of fulfilling it, they felt what seemed to be veritable inspiration, and accepted as the voices of supernatural beings, what was



in fact only the promptings of their own minds. To this influence, in great part, must be accredited much of the sublimity of Homer, patriotism of Tyrtæus, enthusiasm of Pindar, terror of Æschylus, and tenderness of Sophocles. The presence of divinity was indeed so palpable and enduring, that many nations invulnerable to Grecian arms, received her beautiful system of mythology, and crowded her temples with eagerness to listen to her sacred instruction. Lightning strikes only kindred matter, which it seeks and salutes in the vividness of its own flash; and thus do great and effulgent examples glow into genial hearts, strengthen their illuminating power, as they extend, and burn with greater splendor the wider they are diffused.

The more reflecting among the ancients seem to have keenly felt that earth and time are not ample enough to admit the full unfolding of the human soul. In man, the microcosm, they recognized the universe and its Maker, but it was by a very imperfect vision. They needed a clearer light, even that of the true God, to fill the profundity within them, and to reveal eternity unto them, that they might in reality know the vastness of their spiritual being. The vital seeds which the Almighty cast with a bountiful hand into the new-made earth, and which have not yet produced all their fruits, in Attica, sprang up with a wonderful profusion, but the harvest was that of beauty and not holiness. The dew of Sharon, the eternal sunshine of Zion, the transforming and tempering breath of Jehovah, are ever requisite to develop the higher capabilities of the soul, and elicit sanctified fruit from its mighty powers, which, for bliss or bane, germinate in every mortal heart, and can never die. The poetical idolatry of Greece is often invested with a magical beauty to classical enthusiasts; but the thoughtful reader of history will often stumble upon most disenchanting facts, such as, for instance, that Themistocles, the deliverer of his country, offered up three youths to propitiate the favor of his gods. A supreme Being was nominally recognized; and though this doctrine was practically destroyed by the admission of subordinate deities to share in the offices of praise and prayer, still it was better than absolute atheism.

The pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night, clearly or dimly seen, has never ceased to lead the vanguard of advancing humanity. It was something that the voice of praise, humiliation, and prayer was raised to some object of public worship, and thus the feelings of religion kept alive in aspiring souls. It is to be deplored that the most cultivated of ancient nations did not possess and appreciate purer religious light; and most of all is it a grief and a warning that, if in the time of Homer social morality was bad, in the age of Pericles it was worse. When Athenian life had received the most exquisite polish, and human intellect the richest discipline, then it was that public fanes were most abandoned, and private virtue was most debased.

Nature is most perfect in her forms the higher she ascends, and man, standing at the apex of her wonders, is appointed to partake of the divine nature through the homogeneous medium who bends from a celestial height for his relief; when so reached and renovated, the godlike part of the redeemed is moulded to a whole of the purest, holiest, and therefore most enchanting harmony. The Greeks had their idealizations of beneficence and atonement, set forth in Hercules and Prometheus. The genealogy of the first was connected with Egypt and Persia. He was lineally descended from Perseus, whose mortal mother claimed connection with an Egyptian emigrant. He was the great epic subject of the poets before Homer, the model chief of those who fought at Thebes or Troy, and at a later period was the allegory of human effort ascending through rugged valor to the highest virtue. He was the ideal perfection of the ordinary life of the Greeks, as the higher exaggeration of heroes invested with immortality became gods. Every pagan nation has had such a mythical being, whose strength or weakness, victories or defeats, measurably describe the career of the sun through the seasons. A Scythian, an Etruscan, and a Lydian Hercules existed, whose legends all became tributary to those of the Greek hero. His name is supposed to mean *rover* and *perambulator* of earth, as well as *hyperion of the sky*, and he was the patronizing model of those famous navigators who spread his altars from coast to coast, through the Mediterranean to the

extreme west, where *Arkaleus* built the city of Gades, (Cadiz,) on which perpetual fire burned at his shrine. So deep and pervading were religious sentiments in that wonderful people at the best epoch, that not only in lowland towns and on metropolitan eminences were temples erected to the national deities, but also on lofty promontories near the sea, beneficent zeal provided fanes exclusively for the casual worship of the passing mariner. The notion of a suffering deity, of one who, tortured, blinded, or imprisoned, might represent the earthly speculations of his worshippers, and as a penitent their religious emotions, was widely spread from India westwards, and by the Greeks was fixed forever in Prometheus, the ever-dying and yet deathless Titan. Ancient sages taught that the discord of stormy elements would be dissolved and reduced to peace by the power of love, and the magic of beauty in the renovated soul would eventually curb its passions with a gentle rein; but how the infinite should coalesce with the finite, God with man, and thus transform the soul by planting therein the germ of almighty blessedness, they never by uninspired wisdom could comprehend. A mediator of unearthly excellence was indeed requisite, one who would realize in his person the loftiest ideas of beauty and sublimity, whose wisdom would be competent to elevate beyond mere morality, and whose grace would forever unfold the revelation of heavenly life.

Such a Divine need was generally felt, and this was the cause of that high estimation in the common mind which the devout moralists enjoyed. Homer inculcated the idea that life is a contest; and Plato directed his hearers to the search after unity as the source of truth and beauty; Æschylus to power; Euripedes to the law of expiation. The contempt of life and pleasure, the superiority of the intellectual over the physical nature, are expressed by these and kindred writers in great thoughts which are almost identical with the light of faith. Heraclitus taught Hesiod, Pythagoras, Zenophanes and Hecateus, that the sole wisdom consists in knowing the will according to which all things in the world are governed. Marsilius Ficinus says that Socrates was raised up by heaven to pacify minds; and St. John



Chrysostom proposes him as an example of Christian poverty and monastic profession. St. Augustine entertained equal admiration for one who preferred eternal to temporal things, fearing to act unjustly more than death, and for conscience sake was ready to undergo labor, penury, insult, and death. In the *Enthypso* of Platonician wisdom, Socrates disengages ideas from words; in the *Apology* he shows that the wisest are the most humble, and that we must bear our witness to truth, even at the risk of our lives; in the *Laws*, that the soul has need of a celestial light to be able to see; in the *Crito*, that the least duty is to be preferred to the greatest advantage; in the *Phædon*, that life should be employed in elevating the soul—that there is a future existence—and that the soul should be disengaged from the body; in the *Gorgias*, that it is better to suffer than to commit injustice—that it is useful to the soul to be chastised; in the *Euthydemus*, that the science of the sophists is empty and vain; in the second *Alcibiades*, that it is better to be ignorant than to have false knowledge; in the *Theages*, that the only true wisdom is love; in the *Phædrus*, that it is love, or, as Socrates defines it, the desire of something that is wanting which gives wings to the soul, and enables it to mount to heaven; in the *Meno*, that virtue is the gift of God, not of Nature, but an infusion by a Divine influence; in the *Banquet*, that love leads us to contemplate the supreme beauty, the universal type, the Creator, from which vision we derive virtue and immortality. In view of such focal beamings at the heart of Pagan night, we need not wonder that Thomas of Villanova should exclaim with enthusiasm, "Let philosophers know that faith is not without wisdom: the Evangelist does not Platonize, but Plato evangelized."

The mythical beings of Grecian theology display in their beautiful but ineffectual imagery the first efforts of cultivated minds to communicate with nature and her God. They resemble the flowers which fancy strewed before the youthful steps of Psyche when she first set out in pursuit of the immortal object of her love. The parable of the Syrens teems with valuable moral instruction. They dwelt in fair and lovely islands, full of beauty, and through whose leafy al-

coves moved a perpetual loveliness. On the tops of tall rocks sat the enchantresses, pouring their tender and ravishing music on the ears of passing mortals, till they turned their prows thitherward, and rushed into the destruction to which the deceitful song was a fatal prelude. Two by their wisdom and piety escaped. Ulysses caused his arms to be bound to the mast, and the ears of his company to be filled with wax, with special orders to his mariners that they should not loose him even though he desired it. But Orpheus, disdaining to be so bound, with sweet melody went by, singing praises to the gods, thus outsoundng the melodies of the syrens, and so escaped.

The most influential teachers among the Greeks declared the inutility of profuse legislation, and taught that "the halls should not be filled with legal tablets, but the soul with the image of righteousness." They sought less to guard the citizen by force and fear, than to fortify him with a sense of his duty, and its dignity. Parental authority was sustained by legislative sanctions, as well as by popular customs, and even up to the first steps of public life was constantly guarded by the elders; but the principal intent was ever to kindle filial esteem into the potency of living law, to illuminate progressive youth in the path of virtue and of fame. Sound morals were recognized as the only sure foundation of Republican freedom, and the general watchfulness over this constituted the spirit of ancient religion, and the origin of free States. To such an extent did parental influence and pious example, rather than arbitrary statutes and severe punishments, prevail at Athens, that the youth generally were moral and temperate; despite their national inflammability, the most authentic records affirm that, both in domestic and public life, they remained sober and moral, until broken down by the interference of hostile power. Following the defeat of Cheronea, the change in the Greek character was rapid. The guiding stars of literature and art were lost in clouds; and morals, which had attained a splendid maturity, lost both strength and hue.

Sacred ceremonies at Athens were the most luminous of all observed in Greece, and were most characteristic of the

city of intelligence. In the great Panathenean rites (celebrated in the third year of every Olympiad) there was carried in solemn procession to the Acropolis a symbolical vessel, covered with a veil, upon which were figured the triumph of Pallas over the Titans, children of earth, who undertook to scale Olympus, and dethrone Jove. The conflict between physical and moral force was therein represented, that triumph above mere natural religion which exists in mental supremacy and the civilization of law. Moreover, Athenian coins preserve to us allusions to impressive rites which were performed three times a year in honor of Vulcan and Prometheus. The votaries assembled at night, and, at the altar of the deity, upon which a fire continually burned, at a given signal lighted a torch, and ran with the blazing symbol to the city's outer bound. If the lights of some became extinguished, the more fortunate still pursued with greater zeal, and he was most honored who first reached the goal with his torch a-light. But the religion of Greece was not characterized by ritual splendor only; on the contrary, their public worship was marked by the simplicity of devout fervor, as well as by the chasteness of fine taste and that unadorned solemnity which had been inherited from the patriarchal ages. They were much less inclined to pomp and finery connected with their devotion than are the moderns. Rude emblems were sometimes borne at sacred solemnities, but they were in the hands of honorable women, and all offence to religious feeling was arrested, in their being first hallowed by the dignity of the festival.

It was a doctrine of immemorial antiquity, that death is far better than life; that the worst mortality belongs to those who are immersed in the Lethe passions and fascinations of earth, and that the true life begins only when the soul is emancipated. All initiation was but introductory to the great change at death. Many regarded water as the source and purifier of all things; efficacious to renew both body and mind, as the virginity of Juno was restored when she bathed in the fountain Parthenion. Baptism, anointing, embalming, burying, or burning, were preparatory symbols, like the initiation of Hercules before descending to



the shades, pointing out the moral change which should precede the renewal of existence. The funeral ceremonies of the Greeks were in harmony with that feeling which through all antiquity paid marked respect to the dead, whose eyes were closed by relatives most nearly allied. The funeral robe was often woven by the prospective piety of filial hands; as the web of Penelope was destined to shroud her husband's father. The body, washed, anointed, and swathed, was placed with its feet towards the door; and as the train of mourners went forth, women and bards raised a funeral chant, interrupted by nearest kindred, who eulogized the departed, and bewailed their own loss. Reaching the pyre of wood, the corpse was burned, and the ashes collected in a golden vase. While the body lay in state, the chief mourners supported the head. Dark garments, and long abstinence from convivial gatherings, were the outward signs of sorrow. The excessive grief of Achilles showed itself by his throwing dust on his head; torn habiliments and lacerated cheeks were the offerings made to Agamemnon; and a single lock of hair was the touching tribute to his memory by the filial affection of Orestes. The lifeless form was covered and crowned with flowers; a piece of money placed in its mouth, as a fee to Charon for being ferried over Styx, and a cake of honied flour to appease Cerberus. Bust, statue, and mausoleum; grassy mound, inscribed marble, and monumental brass, attested the universal desire of sepulchral honors. The immortality of affectionate remembrances, and of public renown, was a profound aspiration in their breasts. If the dead were ever insulted, it was the rare instance of momentary rage towards a stubborn foe, and soon gave place to worthier emotions. Achilles dragged behind his chariot the corpse of Hector thrice round the tomb of his beloved Patroclus; but, after the first burst of passion, he ordered his own slaves to wash and anoint the mutilated remains, himself assisting to raise them to a litter, swathed in costly garments, that the eye of a broken-hearted father might bear the sight.

The statesmen of Greece, superior as they were in universality of accomplishment, were incomplete personages compared with the pure theocratic natures of antiquity, of whom

Moses is the most familiar and accurate type. Many of them were not only priest and magistrate, but also philosopher, artist, engineer, and physician; such a combination for intensity, regularity, and permanence of human power, never was found elsewhere. Pericles, through the whole tenor of his administration, seemed to have had the permanent welfare of his fellow-countrymen at heart, and is said to have boasted, with the benevolence of a true patriot, that he never caused a citizen to put on mourning.

The Greek was by no means insensible to high destinies, as he majestically assumed the moral dominion on earth to which he was born; but he formed no idea of future happiness, nor of intellectual dignity vaster than his own. He girded himself for the fearful contest which was his inheritance, bravely struggling against the terrible powers of destiny and the certainty of death. Concentrating in the present the intensity of immortal aspirations, he sought to link them forever to the perishable body. Earthly as was his spirit, he yet supremely coveted eternal life, and labored through transcendent genius and fortitude to unite himself immediately with the gods, and ultimately soar amidst the splendid hierarchy of the upper skies.

The worship of Greece was the Beautiful, and Athens was its most magnificent shrine. One of her latest and fairest altars was dedicated to the Unknown God. Would that the plinth of artistic beauty had also been the memento of spiritual prayer. Alas! that after all the fine imaginings and glorious achievements of the wondrous Greeks, we must still feel that their loftiest conceptions of divine worship were really as void of true consolation as the empty urn which Electra washed with her tears.

## ARTICLE VI.—TERTULLIAN AND HIS WRITINGS.

THE position of Tertullian among the Christian Fathers is one of very great prominence. This is not more the result of his decided peculiarities, than of the age in which he lived, and his relation to theological opinion. He is almost the only *Latin* writer, in the second century, who elucidated and defended the Christian religion, and he lived just at the turning point in the development of the Church; just at the boundary line between two distinct epochs—the time of the *old* and of the *new* in religion. He is therefore the first representative of the theological character of all the north African churches, and the first and main representative of the Montanistic, and some other opinions, vastly influential in their bearings. Facts like these render this writer a marked man, and justify more attention to his productions than has ordinarily been bestowed.

QUINTUS SEPTIMIUS FLORENS TERTULLIANUS was the son of a pagan centurion of proconsular rank, and was born about A. D. 160, at Carthage. He was bred to the law, and must have received a good literary education, as his writings bear evidence of intimate familiarity with the Greek language as well as with his native tongue, and of extensive historical and antiquarian knowledge. His conversion from heathenism was probably A. D. 196, when he joined the church in Carthage, where he was made a presbyter. It would seem that he remained in this connection scarcely five years, but long enough to compose some of his best treatises. Not far from the year 201 he adopted the sentiments of Montanus, a man of weak judgment, living in a village of Phrygia, called Pepuza, who began to spread his strange doctrines about A. D. 171 or 172. Jerome, and after him most writers, assert that Tertullian was prompted to pass over to Montanism, by the envy and insults of the Roman clergy; but it may be questioned whether this statement has any real foundation. As a learned writer has intimated, there was always a strong disposition to explain the transition from the acknowledged



orthodox party to an heretical sect, by external considerations. More wisely does this writer attribute the change in Tertullian's views to the ascetic element which had now long time been in the Church, and to which there was an obvious bias in Tertullian's disposition.

Montanism was in direct contrast with Gnosticism, whose peculiar feature was the speculative tendency.\* That which formed the marked distinction of Tertullian's spirit was his attachment to the supposed simple facts of Christianity, and an uncereemonious rejection of all philosophical investigations and idealistic subtleties and refinements. An excessive one-sidedness in this direction naturally enough led Tertullian to become the point of union in whom the existing Montanistic tendency found an embodiment and intelligible expression.

Among the characteristics of Tertullian may be named a lively fancy and a vivacity and quickness of perception, suggesting ingenious combinations, and from his early education as an advocate sometimes leading him, especially in controversy, to rhetorical exaggerations, an ardent mind and warmth of disposition, which secured for a cherished object his soul and strength, rejecting everything uncongenial to that object; acuteness and depth of intellect, with a large fund-of knowledge, but wanting in logical clearness and harmonious arrangement; in a word, a strange combination of the lovely and the morose, the weak and the powerful, the crude and the finished, the rugged and attractive, the good and the bad. Vincentius' eulogistic description is somewhat inflated:

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\* Montanism maintained the doctrine of a *gradual advance of the Church according to a general law of development of the kingdom of God*. In the works of grace, say the Montanists, as well as in the works of nature, both of which come from the same Creator, everything develops itself according to a certain gradation; from the seed first comes the shrub, which gradually increases to a tree; the tree first attains leaves, then follows the bloom, and out of this comes the fruit, which also attains to ripeness only by degrees. Thus also the kingdom of righteousness develops itself by certain degrees; first come the fear of God in accordance with the voice of nature, without a revealed law, (the Patriarchal religion;) then come its infancy under the law and the prophets; then its youth under the Gospel; then its development to the maturity of manhood through the new outpouring of the Holy Ghost, together with the appearance of Montanus, who claimed to be the promised Paraclete.—See Neander's *History Christian Religion and Church*, first three centuries, pp. 328, 329.

As Origen among the Greeks, so is Tertullian among the Latins, to be accounted for the first of all our writers. For who was more learned than he? Who in divinity or humanity more practiced. And for his wit, was he not so excellent, so grave, so forcible, that he almost undertook the overthrow of nothing which, either by quickness or weight of reason, he crushed not? Further, who is able to express the praises which his style of speech deserves, which is fraught with that force of reason, that such as it cannot persuade it compels to assent; whose so many words almost are so many sentences; whose so many senses, so many victories. This know Marcion and Apelles, Praxeas and Hermogenes. Jews. Gentiles, Gnostics, and divers others; whose blasphemous opinions he hath overthrown with his many and great volumes, as it had been with thunderbolts.\*

As a picture of the man, that of Neander is not less just than beautiful:

There are lovely natures, in whom whatever is beautiful in man becomes heightened by the divine life which Christianity brings, and in whom Christianity appears still more attractive from being placed in forms of such natural loveliness. And there are rugged and angular natures, in whom, when, after many conflicts, they have made their way to the Christian life, the rude and rugged in their dispositions is overcome and smoothed down by the power of Christianity. But there are others in whom, though they have been deeply impressed by Christianity, yet the rugged and the angular, the harsh and the rude of their natural character, still remain and operate. The treasure of the divine life here appears in an unpleasing form, which would easily repel a superficial observer from their society. To this class Tertullian belongs.†

It is more than probable that in this last remark is found one main reason why the *writings* of this Father have not been more highly appreciated. He has been termed a "leaden genius," concerning whom it is a wonder that he "floated down even on the rapid and dense tide of ecclesiastical admiration." And the question has been asked, "What would have been the loss had he sunk to merited oblivion?"‡ We cannot but regard this estimate as exceedingly superficial. Tertullian's genius was far from "leaden," though wild and unchastened. It must not be forgotten that he had at hand no suitable casket for his thoughts; that he was obliged to create a language for the new spiritual matter, and that, too, as Neander intimates, out of the old rough Punic Latin. No one can read his writings without being persuaded that he had *something to say* when he wrote; nay, that he had within him more than he could express; the overflowing spirit

\* Quoted in Dodgson's Tertullian, Preface.

† Antignosticus, p. 13.

‡ See Bib. Soc., vol. iii., p 691.

being dammed up or obstructed for the want of an adequate form. And yet we must contend, that although the style of Tertullian is often artificial and difficult, it is, nevertheless, fascinating, from its originality and peculiar brilliancy and force. He is often decidedly eloquent; and generally discovers the one great quality of eloquence, condensed expression; his "so many words" being *sometimes* "almost so many sentences."

But it is as furnishing historical data for a just estimate of the condition of the early Christian Church, and of the state of religious opinion in his time, that Tertullian's writings are chiefly valuable. An interesting and instructive chapter might be written upon the insidious corruptions that found a place in the post-apostolic churches, and their points and connection with acknowledged truths, taking as its foundation the works which remain of Tertullian alone. As far back as his time would be found the germinal errors from which the *Papacy* has been directly evolved. Nay, it would be seen that Tertullian himself, if not *advocating* many of those errors, certainly *entertained* them. It is a most humiliating reflection that the teachers of religion and the churches should have become so early corrupted from the simplicity of the Gospel. But it is neither strange nor unaccountable, for Christianity was now in its infancy and inexperience, and yet in constant and close contact with the prevailing philosophies, falsely so called, by which it became contaminated. Moreover, its advocates, at the best, were but partially enlightened, and perhaps superstitious; and the inspired Scriptures were circulated, from the necessity of the case, only within the narrowest limits.

Before especially alluding to particular portions of Tertullian's writings, we will present some traces of the Papal leaven which we have detected in their examination. It will illustrate our remark above, and may also serve as a necessary caution in order to the right use of the writings in question. In his *De Corona Militis* we find Tertullian appealing to *tradition* as authority in things religious:

"If no Scripture hath determined this," says he, "assuredly custom hath confirmed it, which doubtless hath been derived from tradition. For how can a thing be used unless it be first delivered to us?"



He speaks of observances, which,

without any Scripture document, we defend on the ground of tradition alone, and by the supports of consequent custom.

He refers to several of them, and then adds,

For these and such like rules if thou requirest a law in the Scriptures, thou shalt find none. Tradition will be pleaded to thee as originating them, custom as confirming them, and faith as observing them. That reason will support tradition and custom and faith, thou wilt either thyself perceive, or learn from some one who hath perceived it.

One of these observances he specifies as taking place after baptism, thus: "Then, some undertaking the charge of us;" an allusion to the "*susceptores*," or adopters, the *god-fathers* or sponsors, as they afterwards come to be called. Here we find, also, an undue importance and efficacy assigned to the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. He sees something *sacred* in the outward symbols, and remarks, "We feel pained if any of the wine, or even of our bread, be spilled upon the ground," and that from the day of baptism "we abstain for a whole week from our daily washing." It is easy to perceive in these remarks the idea of *holiness*, and of some *magical power* in the bread and wine, and in the baptismal waters. In his *De Baptismo*, Tertullian is explicit as to the necessity of baptism in order to salvation. He speaks of a "rule" being "laid down, that salvation cometh to none without baptism;" and in meeting the objection that faith *only* is required in order to be saved, as in the case of Abraham, says:

Be it that salvation was once through bare faith, before the passion and resurrection of the Lord; but when faith grew up to a belief in His birth, passion, and resurrection, an enlargement was added to the Sacrament, the sealing of baptism, the clothing, in a manner, of that faith which before was naked. Nor doth it (faith) now avail without its own condition. . . . And he adds that the commission "*hath bound down faith to the necessity of baptism.*"

He also speaks of coming to baptism as hastening to "the remission of sins;" and in his *De Oratione* recommends that certain persons "keep the consecrated bread by itself, and partake of it after their fast was over;" as if, from its *consecration*, there was an indwelling efficacy in it. Hence the custom of taking away some of the bread of the Supper,

and laying it up at home as a part of the Lord's body. Tertullian makes mention of a prevalent custom of marking the forehead with the sign of the cross.

In all our travels and movements, in all our coming in and going out, in putting on our shoes, at the bath, at the table, in lighting our candles, in lying down, in sitting down, whatever employment occupieth us, we mark our forehead with the sign of the cross.

This was at first a beautiful expression of the inward Christian life which pervaded the whole being; but afterwards, as we know, degenerated into a mere mechanism, obscuring rather than making ever present the idea of Christianity. The following is a remark of Tertullian in his work on prayer: "Will not thy station be more solemn if thou standest at the altar of God." The idea of an *altar* as connected with that of a *sacrifice* seems here implied. If so, we discover a point of connection between the simple act of *prayer*, and the Popish ceremony of the *mass*.

In Tertullian's time a custom obtained which directly furnished, at a later day, a point of connection for this false notion of the sacrifice of the mass. He alludes to it in the first of the treatises referred to above, thus: "We offer, on one day every year, oblations for the dead as birth-day honors." These were in honor of the martyrs, offered on the anniversaries of their martyrdom; and no doubt proceeded from the depths of Christian feeling; but though in itself an innocent thing, superstition and priestly-craft rendered it prolific of evil. Tertullian extolls the virtue of *bodily austerities* and of *celibacy*. The higher and more blessed stages of bodily patience he declares, "both keepeth one a widow, and sealeth another as a virgin, and exalteth him that has made himself an eunuch unto the kingdom of Heaven." Commending those who refrained from marriage in the ecclesiastical orders, "killing in themselves the concupiscence of lust," he says, "Hence it is taken for granted that those who wished to be received into Paradise, ought to abstain from that which is in Paradise unknown." Of confession he says,

It directeth also in the matter of dress and food, to be in sackcloth and ashes, to hide his body in filthy garments, to cast down his spirit with mourning, to exchange for severe treatment the sins which he has committed; for the rest to use simple things for meat and drink, to wit, not

for the belly's sake, but the soul's sake; for the most part also to cherish prayer by fasts, to groan, to weep, and to moan day and night unto the Lord his God; to throw himself upon the ground before the presbyters, and to fall on his knees before the beloved of God. All these things doeth confession, that, by judging of itself the sinner, it may act in the stead of God's wrath, and that by means of temporal affliction, it may, I will not say frustrate, but discharge the eternal penalties. . . . In the measure in which thou sparest not thyself, be assured will God spare thee.

It needs but little improvement to make this good, sound, Romish doctrine in our day; when these early germs have become trees, yielding plentifully their poisonous fruit.

In his treatise upon the soul, Tertullian distinctly teaches that some will be raised to a participation of millennial happiness earlier than others, according to the degree of their purification from sin; and that every sin, even the least, must be atoned for by a delay of the resurrection.\* Hence afterward arose the idea of purification by punishment, an *ignis purgatorius*. But we have already continued these citations beyond what was intended, and now proceed to a more particular mention of some of the writings under review.

#### APOLOGY AGAINST THE HEATHEN.

The persecutions which befell the Christians in North Africa were the occasion of this production. It was probably written A. D. 198, under the reign of Severus, and before he became a persecutor. The book is distinguished for its spirit and force, and is full of striking passages. In it are some of the most important testimonies to the rapid spread of Christianity. A few of these we append.

*As to the number of the disciples, Tertullian says,*

Men cry out that the State is beset, that the Christians are in their fields, in their forts, in their islands. They mourn, as for a loss, that every age, sex, condition, and now even rank is going over to this sect. . . . We are a people of yesterday, and yet we have filled every place belonging to you, cities, islands, castles, towns, assemblies, your very camp, your tribes, companies, palace, senate, forum. We leave you your temples only. We can count your armies; our numbers in a single province will be greater.

The noble conclusion of his *ad Scapulam* is so much in point that it must be introduced. Alluding to a certain proconsul in Lesser Asia who was so alarmed at the great number he was called upon to slay, as to exclaim, "*miserable*

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\* "Modico quoque delicto mora resurrectionis expenso."



men ! if ye wish to die, ye have precipices and halters !" Tertullian says,

If the same thing should be done here, what wilt thou do with so many thousands of human beings? How many fires, how many swords would be needed? What will Carthage, which thou must decimate, endure, when every man recognizes there his own kinsfolk and comrades? Spare then thyself if not us; spare Carthage if not thyself. We have no master save God alone. He is before thee and cannot be hidden; but He is one to whom thou canst do nothing. But those whom thou thinkest to be masters are men, and must themselves one day die. Yet this sect shall never fail, for know that it is the more built up when it seems to be stricken down. For every one who beholds so much endurance, being struck with some misgiving, is kindled with the desire of inquiring what there is in the cause, and when he has discovered the truth respecting it, forthwith he follows it himself.

Here is a noble plea for soul-liberty :

Let one worship God, another Jupiter; let one raise his suppliant hands to heaven, another to the altar of Fides. See to it whether this does not deserve the name of irreligion, to wish to take away the freedom of religion, and to forbid a choice of Gods, so that I may not worship whom I will, but be compelled to worship whom I do not will. No one, not even a human being, will desire to be worshipped by any one against his will.

Tertullian makes the following happy allusion to the *lights borrowed from God's temple* :

For the antiquity of the Holy Scriptures, already established, yet again serveth me in making it very credible that this was the store-house of all the wisdom of later times.—Which of the poets, which of the sophists is there, who have not drunk from the fountain of the Prophets? Hence, therefore, have the philosophers also watered the dryness of their own understanding.—And no wonder if the wit of the philosophers have perverted the ancient document, — and from the one way cut out many devious and inextricable mazes.

In the course of his argument, he thus traces the *Analogies of the Resurrection* :

The light which is extinct every day, shineth forth again, and the darkness also departeth and succeedeth in its turn. The stars that have died away revive again; the seasons when they end begin anew; the fruits are consumed and again return; the seeds assuredly spring not up with new fruitfulness, except they first be corrupted and dissolved; all things are by dying preserved; all things are formed again by death. Should thou, a man, a name so great, thou, who, if thou knowest thyself as thou mayest learn to do, even from the Pythian inscription,\* art the lord of all things that die and rise again, shalt thou die to perish forever?

We are constrained to add a beautiful passage here from the *De Resurrectione Carnis*, where Tertullian is treating expressly of this subject :

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\* " Know thyself."

Look, now, at the examples of the divine power. Day dies into night, and on all sides is buried in darkness. The glory of the world is dishonored; everything that exists is covered with blackness; all things are rendered mean, silent, and torpid; there is a general mourning; a cessation of all business. Thus the lost light is mourned for. And yet again it revives with its own ornament and dowry with the sun, the same as before, whole and entire, slaying its own death, night; bursting its sepulchre, the darkness; coming forth, the heir to itself, until night revives with its own accompaniments. The rays of the stars are rekindled, which the morning glow had extinguished. The absent constellations are brought back, which the destruction of time had taken away. The mirrors of the moon are re-adorned, which the monthly number had worn away. The winters and summers revolve, and springs and autumns, with their own powers, habits and fruits. Earth receives instructions from heaven to clothe the trees after they have been stripped, to color the flowers afresh, again to bring forth the herbage, to exhibit the same seeds that had been taken away, and not to exhibit them before they are taken away. Wonderful procedure, from a defrauder to become a preserver; that she may restore, she takes away; that she may guard, she destroys; that she may retain entire, she injures; that she may increase, she consumes. Nothing perishes but for salvation. Therefore this whole revolving order of things is an attestation of the resurrection of the dead. God wrote it in his works before he wrote it in his Word. He has sent nature as thy first teacher, that thou mayest receive as soon as thou hearest what thou seest already on all sides.

The following is Tertullian's brilliant conclusion of his noble testimony:

Ye may now call us faggot-men, and half-axle-men, because being bound to the wood of half-an-axle, we are burnt by a circle of faggots enclosing us. This is the garb of our conquest, this our robe of victory; in such a chariot do we triumph. Go on, ye righteous rulers, much more righteous in the eyes of the people if ye sacrifice the Christians to them, rack, torment, condemn, grind us to powder: for your injustice is proof of our innocence. Nor yet will your cruelty, though more and more refined, profit you anything. It is rather an allurements to our sect. Our numbers increase in proportion as you mow us down. The blood of the Christians is their seed—that very obstinacy with which ye upbraid us, the teacher. For who is not incited by the contemplation of it to inquire what is the reality of the matter? Who, when he hath inquired, doth not join us; when he hath joined us, doth not desire to suffer? Hence it is that we thank you for your judgments; such is the rivalry between divine and human things, when we are condemned by you, we are acquitted by God.\*

#### OF PUBLIC SHOWS.

After the *Apology*, the next larger work of Tertullian is the *De Spectaculis*, which was probably written when some great shows were exciting attention, perhaps in connection with Severus' return to Rome, after his victory over Albinus,

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\* This celebrated passage has been variously translated. We have adopted none of the renderings; but followed, mainly, that in the "Library of the Fathers;" to parts of which collection we are greatly indebted in the preparation of this article.

A. D. 198. It treats of the general question of Christian conformity to the world, but particularly of the propriety on the part of those then living, of mingling in the public exhibitions, always obscene, and generally bloody, which were peculiar to that age. The subject is one which entered deeply into the relations and life of the early disciples, and to the discussion of which Tertullian gave himself with his usual ability and zeal. We can make room for only a few specimen passages. Tertullian thus sets forth the doctrine that there is no *communion of light with darkness*:

God has commanded that the Holy Spirit should be received with tranquillity and gentleness, with peace and stillness, and not be disquieted by passion, rage and anger, and the violence of irritated feelings. How can such a spirit put up with the exhibitions of the play-house? for no play goes off without violent commotion of the minds of the spectators. Amidst the clamor of the players, can any man think upon the promise of a prophet, or meditate upon a psalm during the melodious strains of an eunuch? . . . God avert from his people so great a desire after murderous pleasure! for what manner of thing is it to go from the church of God into the church of the devil—from the sky, as they say, to the sty? to weary afterward, in applauding a player, those hands which thou hast lifted up to God? to give thy testimony for a gladiator out of the mouth with which thou hast uttered amen to *That Holy Thing*;\* to say *forever and ever* to any being save to God and Christ? On such sweets, let his own guests be fattened; the places, and the times, and the bidder to the feast, are their own. Our feasts, our marriage are not yet."

*The pleasures of a religious life* are then delineated:

But now suppose thou art to pass this life in delights. Why art thou so ungrateful as not to be content with, and not to acknowledge the pleasures, so many and great, which God bestows upon thee? For what can be more delightful than reconciliation with God our Father and Lord? than the revelation of truth? than the discovery of errors? than the pardon of so many past offences? What greater pleasure than a disgust for pleasure itself? than a contempt for the whole world? than true liberty? than a pure conscience? than a blameless life? than no fear of death? than to tread under foot the gods of the nations? to cast out demons? to perform cures? to seek for revelation to live unto God? These are the pleasures, these the shows of the Christians, holy, everlasting, free. If knowledge, if learning delight thee, we have enough of books, enough of verses, enough of maxims, enough also of song, enough of sounds; not fables, but verities, not cunningly wrought, but simple strains. Wouldst thou have fightings and wrestlings? Behold immodesty cast down by chastity, perfidy slain by fidelity, cruelty crushed by compassion, impudence eclipsed by modesty. Such are our contests in which we gain the crown. Wouldst thou also somewhat of blood? thou hast Christ's."

#### OF BAPTISM.

Upon this subject Tertullian has a long, and, in many

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\* "*Sanctum*," probably alluding to the Eucharist.



respects, important treatise. It seems to have been called forth in vindication of the necessity of outward baptism, against opponents of various kinds who had arisen, and particularly against Quintilla of Carthage, who at least gave the first impulse to the controversy on this subject. At the same time, Tertullian wished to discriminate as to the real import of baptism, and its precise limitations; as also to qualify believers for a right understanding and defence of their faith. The instruction of the Catechumens, that they might come to baptism with right apprehensions and feelings, was, too, a special object which he had in view.

The incidental evidence which may be drawn from this treatise in support of the peculiar views of Baptists, is of a very decided character. It is highly important, on account of the age whence it is derived, and from its singular uniformity. We will bring together some allusions which Tertullian makes to the mode of baptism, as it is generally, but unfortunately called. In the *De Corona* occurs the following:

"We do in the Church testify that we renounce the devil and his pomp, and his angels; then are we thrice *dipped*."\*

From the *De Baptismo* we select the following passages:

Is it not wonderful that death should be washed away by a mere *bath*? . . . There is no difference whether a man be *washed in the sea or in a pool; in a river or in a fountain; in a lake or in a canal*. . . . After this, having *come out from the bath*, we are anointed thoroughly with a blessed unction. . . . In baptism itself the act is carnal, that we are *dipped in the water*, the effect spiritual, that we are delivered from our sins. . . . We *enter*, then, the *laver* but once." In the *De Penitentia*, Tertullian alludes to Rom. vi. 4, and speaks of baptism as "*the likeness of death*."

We note some of the references to the proper *subjects* of baptism. He makes *Faith* that which *receives* the forgiveness of sins in baptism; and combating haste in this ordinance, declares that where a *right faith* is present, that faith is sure of salvation.† In striking uniformity with this is the following view, expressed by Athanasius a little more than a century later:

For this cause did the Saviour not merely command to baptize, but

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\* This is Dodgson's rendering (Pedo-Baptist), and the only possible one. In each instance, here, we take his, or Neander's.

† "Fides, integra, secunda de salute."

saith first, "*teach*," that through the teaching the faith may be right, and with the faith the perfecting of baptism may be added.

Tertullian says, in his *De Pœnitentia* :

We are not washed in order that we may cease from sinning, but because we *have* ceased, because we have *already* been washed in heart. For this is the first baptism of the hearer, namely, an entire fear of God; and, next, from the time that thou turnest thy thoughts toward the Lord, a sound faith, a conscience that hath once for all embraced repentance. . . The divine grace, that is, the forgiveness of sins, remains unimpaired for those who are to be baptized; but then they must perform their part, so as to become capable of receiving it.

In the following passage from the *De Baptismo*, Tertullian directly opposes the baptism of young children.

Let them come when they are grown up: let them come when they are disciples: when they are taught whither they are coming; let them become Christians [i. e. *professedly* so, implying, by the way, that baptism was equivalent to a profession of the Christian religion] when they are able to know Christ. Why does the innocent age hasten to the remission of sins? . . . "The delaying of baptism," he also states, "is more profitable, especially in the case of children."

That is, those who are very young, and about whose conversion, therefore, there is a degree of uncertainty. Should it be supposed that exceptions were allowable, according to Tertullian's theory, in case of threatened death, and that he was only speaking of *ordinary* cases, even this seems not admissible; for how could he have omitted distinctly to state any possible exceptions? In the opinion of Tertullian, therefore, baptism was not admissible "without the conscious participation of the person baptized, and his own individual faith." These last words are Neander's, when speaking on this very point, and we cannot refrain from citing, still farther, to the same effect, from this distinguished historian. After alluding to Tertullian's judgment respecting infant baptism, he says:

We have every reason for holding infant baptism to be no Apostolic institution, and that it was something foreign to that first stage of Christian development. At first, baptism necessarily marked a distinct era in life, when a person passed over from a different religious stand-point to Christianity, when the regeneration, sealed by baptism, presented itself as a principle of moral transformation, in opposition to the earlier development.\*

#### ADDRESS TO THE MARTYRS.

The many Christians who were languishing in prison at the commencement of the persecution, during Tertullian's time,

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\* Antignosticus, Part II., De Baptismo.

called forth this tender effusion of Christian sympathy. It was, probably, one of Tertullian's earliest productions, and opens with these kind words: "Along with the means of bodily nourishment which your mother the Church, from her stores, and individual brethren from their private property, send to you while in prison, receive from me something which may serve for the sustenance of your souls."

It is pervaded with fine sentiments, and striking paragraphs, one or two of which we will here introduce.

He represents the *body as confined, but the spirit free*:

Away with the name of a prison; let us call it a retirement. Though the body be shut up, though the flesh be confined, all is open to the spirit. Roam freely, thou spirit, walk to and fro thou spirit, not setting before thee shady walks, nor long cloisters, but that *way* which leadeth unto God. The leg suffereth nothing in the stocks, while the mind is in heaven.

Ye are about to enter, he says, a noble contest, in which God is the umpire, the Holy Spirit overseeing; the crown is eternity; the prize is an angelic life, a citizenship in heaven, everlasting glory.

Tertullian reminds the sufferers of what men will voluntarily endure for *earthly* distinction, and thus points to the *glory yet to be revealed*:

If earthly glory hath so great power over the strength of body and mind, that men despise the sword, the fire, the cross, the beasts, the tortures, for the reward of the praise of men, I may say these sufferings are trifling in the gaining of heavenly glory and a divine reward. Is the glass bead of such value? of how much the real *pearl*? Who, then, is not bound to spend most willingly for that which is true, as much as others do for that which is false?

#### OF PATIENCE.

Tertullian's *De Patientia* has always been esteemed one of his most brilliant pieces. It everywhere breathes a spirit of love and gentleness, and contains passages of singular eloquence.\* It was written before the author's transition to Montanism. The call for the exercising of patience, Tertullian remarks is—

The Divine ordering of a lively and heavenly rule, setting forth God himself as the example of patience, first as the being who scattereth the dew of his light equally over the just and the unjust, who suffereth the offices of the seasons, the services of the elements, the tributes of the whole creation, to come alike to the worthy and the unworthy; bearing with those most unthankful nations who worship the follies of their own

\* This beautiful production may be found translated, nearly entire, in the "*History and Repository of Pulpit Eloquence*," by Rev. H. C. Fish, recently published by M. W. Dodd, New York.



craft, so that by his own patience he robbeth himself, seeing that the greater part believed in the Lord for this reason, because that for so long time they have not known that he is wroth with the world.

*Christ is then held up as an example of patience :*

God suffers himself to be conceived in the womb of a mother, and abides the time, and being born, endures to grow up into youth—is baptized by his own servant, and repels the attacks of the tempter by words only. He despised no one's table nor house ; he poured out water to wash his disciples' feet ; he despised not publicans and sinners ; he was not wroth with the city that refused to receive him ; he healed the unthankful, and gave place to those who laid snares for him. This were little if he had not had even his betrayer with him, without constantly pointing him out. And when he was delivered up, when he was led as a sheep to the slaughter, he opened not his mouth.

Our limits forbid further allusion to this production. It is hard to restrain the pen from particular mention of several others of Tertullian's writings ; such as his work on *Repentance*, his excellent piece on *Prayer*, his *Testimony of the Soul*, his *Address to Scapula*, and the letters which he wrote to his wife ; all of which, with also a few others, have come down to our times. But we must cut short the string of pearls, by commending to the reader the casket whence they have been culled.

#### ARTICLE VII.—NOTICES OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

*The English Bible.* History of the Translation of the Holy Scriptures into the English Tongue. With Specimens of the Old English Versions. By MRS. H. C. CONANT. (New York : Sheldon, Blakeman & Co. 1856. 12mo, pp. 466.)

This is a volume of more than ordinary interest, evincing much patient thought, and a range of research far beyond what its title would seem to indicate. Our most sanguine anticipations have been more than realized in perusing the work. And such, we are quite sure, will be the verdict borne to its favor by all who shall give it a careful reading.

The style of Mrs. Conant, if not terse, is nevertheless invariably perspicuous and engaging—well adapted to didactic writing. And if we may judge another's pleasure and advantage by our own, no one can rise from the perusal of this History uninstructed and unimproved.

The plan of the work is direct, and equally removed from the voluminousness of Anderson's *Annals* and the tedious minuteness of Lewis's *History*. We were specially pleased with the judicious blending of incidental occurrences both in Church and State, when apposite, with the successive stages respectively of Bible translation. In no part of the work is there evinced greater skill or a juster estimate of the materials to be woven into the contemplated design. Attending circumstances invariably qualify in some degree

the acts of councils, as of individuals, whether in a single or associated capacity. It is well, therefore, that the talented authoress has connected with her history of translation the concurring and apposite circumstances which are so closely identified with the translations themselves.

We are inclined to think that our accomplished authoress has, in a few instances, misapprehended the motives which at times influenced individuals whose characters were subjected to her dissecting knife. We had not supposed that the founding of Cardinal's College, of Oxford, "was a magnificent project for converting progress itself into a barrier against progress; for raising up a clergy qualified by rigid intellectual discipline and eminent scholarship, to snatch from the Reformers the leadership of the awakening age," p. 122.

The Cardinal was indeed no friend to the reformation in religion. But he was an ardent friend and patron of institutions for liberal education. He lived, in this respect, in advance of his age. Learned himself, he sought to build up and endow an institution, as he purposed, "the most glorious in the universe." He enriched it by his own princely donations. He even put a period to forty-one priories and nunneries, and turned their immense wealth into the establishment of a college where vast numbers of youth might be educated. All this, it is true, was adverse to his religious views, but it suited his ambition and love of learning. And God, who is wise in devising and skilful in working, made this stupendous monument of learning contribute largely to the promotion of pure Christianity.

Again: we are not able to see so clearly, as Mrs. Conant seems to have done, that King James entertained the proposition of Dr. Reynolds for a new translation of the Bible from motives of "the establishment of Episcopacy and the extinction of Puritanism." However intent his majesty was at the Hampton Court Conference to exchange fully his Scotch Presbyterianism for English Episcopacy, it can hardly be made to appear that his design, in readily accepting the proposition for a new translation of the Bible, was to promote such a purpose.

Had such been the governing motive of his majesty, the proposition should not have come from the Puritan party, nor have been opposed by the Episcopal functionaries.

"How, then," very pertinently asks Mrs. Conant, "is the fact to be explained, that in regard to one point of vital interest (the translation), the wishes of the Puritan ministry received the prompt concurrence of the king, and that manifestly against the wishes of their opponents?" Not, it appears to us, from any general desire which may have prevailed at the time for a new translation. Nor yet from a previously conceived purpose to make the "new version the chief agent in maintaining the established order."

The truth is, the king had long entertained the project of a new translation of the English Scriptures, even before coming to the throne of England. While a firm and doting Presbyterian, he pressed the desirableness of a revision of the Bible. In an assembly convoked by his royal proclamation, May 18, 1601, and convened at Brunt Island, a new translation of the Bible

was proposed. "His majesty did urge earnestly, and with many reasons did persuade the undertaking of the work, showing the necessity and the profit of it, and what a glory the performing thereof should bring to the Church." We are further told that "It was the joy of all that were present to hear it, and bred no little admiration in the whole assembly, who, approving the motion, did recommend the translation to such of the brethren as were most skilled in the languages."

From all this it would appear that the king was as intent on a new translation when a Presbyterian as when an Episcopalian. And it is to be presumed, therefore, that his desire for a new version was not to support the Episcopacy as such, but from motives of a higher order. The imperfections of the version then in general use were too glaring not to attract the notice of his majesty.

Our authoress need not be alarmed should we notice another slight mistake into which she has inadvertently fallen. She supposes that *ecclesia* (ἐκκλησία)—the proper Greek word for church—is found in Acts xix. 37 of the Greek Testament. This is not the case. The original is altogether another word with a very different signification. The word is *ierosulous*, (ιεροσυλούς,) and means *sacrilegious*, or, as our version has it, "*robbers of churches*"—more agreeable to the Greek "*robbers of temples*."

We could have desired that Mrs. Conant had been more full in her account of translations subsequent to the commonly-received version. It ought to be known that a master in Israel—a man of vast and varied learning, and withal, a Baptist, translated the English Scriptures. Mr. Lewis, in his history of translations, informs us that "The learned Mr. *Henry Jessey*, one well skilled in the Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, and Greek tongues, is said to have drawn up an Essay towards an amendment of this last (King James) version," p. 355. Mr. Jessey was a Baptist minister of great learning. He commanded almost universal respect, both for his piety and ripeness of erudition. Nevertheless, he was called to suffer much in common with his brethren in those troublesome times.

But he did more than draw up an Essay respecting a revision of the Bible. He had nearly completed a translation of the entire Scriptures at the time of his death. Mr. Walter Wilson, in his History of Dissenting Churches, says, "Mr. Jessey was employed many years upon a new translation of the Bible, in which he was assisted by many learned men, both at home and abroad. This was made the great master-study of his life." \* \* \* "Mr. Jessey had nearly completed this great work when the Restoration took place; but the subsequent turn to public affairs obliged him to lay it aside, and this noble design eventually proved abortive." Vol. 1, p. 44.

The judicious reader will do well to observe with what preparation and carefulness Mr. Jessey ventured upon the translation of the Bible. He deemed it a labor for life, and that, too, when calling to his aid the most renowned scholars, both at home and abroad. Such caution in dealing with the Word of God is worthy of all commendation.



Abating a few things of minor importance, we highly value this work, and take pleasure in commending it to the favorable regards of those who desire to become acquainted with the general history of the translation of our English Scriptures.

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*Discourses and Essays.* By WILLIAM G. T. SHEDD. Published by W. F. Draper, Andover, Mass., 1856. 12mo, pp. 271. The discourses and essays, six in number, which compose this volume, were originally printed in separate forms, but were mostly out of print and difficult to be obtained. Draper & Co. have wisely judged them possessed of sufficient value to be collected in one volume, and preserved in a more accessible form. They are worthy of such distinction.

Prof. Shedd is a clear thinker, and, with a good command of language, is enabled to express himself with great transparency and force. Even on abstruse questions and metaphysics, it is seldom difficult to understand what he intends to convey to the mind of the reader. And though you may not at all times approve of his reasoning, nor be disposed to adopt his deductions, yet you cannot fail of being pleased, even charmed, with the perspicuous manner in which he offers you a view of his sentiments.

The essays on "The Doctrine of Original Sin," and on "The Relation of Language and Style to Thought," are reprints from the "Christian Review" and from the "Bibliotheca Sacra" respectively. The former of these—"The Doctrine of Original Sin"—has awakened no inconsiderable interest, and has been much sought and extensively read—even to a degree that the No. of the "Christian Review" containing it has become scarce.

Prof. Shedd, on pp. 225, 226 of the volume before us, gives, in brief, the views he entertains respecting original sin, which we will take the liberty to present to our readers:

"In commencing the investigation of the doctrine of original sin, we naturally start from one distinct and unambiguous statement of Scripture; and we know of no one at once so plain and full as the affirmation of St. Paul, that man is by nature a child of wrath. The doctrine of a guilty nature in man is taught either by implication, or by an explicit detail, in other passages in Paul's Epistles, in the Psalms of David, in the Epistles of John, in the Prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, and in the teachings of Christ; but perhaps no single text of Scripture enounces the doctrine so briefly and comprehensively as this. It makes specific mention of the two principal characteristics of human sinfulness: (1) its depth, and, by implication, its universality; and (2) its guilt. After all that may be said upon this boundless subject, in its various relations to man, to the universe, and to God, the whole substance of the doctrine may be crowded into a very narrow compass. When we have said that man is *by nature a child of wrath*—when we have said that sin is a nature, and that nature is guilt—we have said in substance all that can be said. The most exhaustive investigation of the subject will not reveal any feature or element that is not contained by implication in this brief statement."

These discourses and essays will be read with no ordinary interest.

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*Appleton's Cyclopædia of Biography:* Embracing a Series of Original Memoirs of the Most Distinguished Persons of All Times. American Edition.

Edited by FRANCIS L. HAWKS, D.D., LL.D. With numerous illustrations. (New York : D. Appleton & Co., 346 and 348 Broadway. 1856. 8vo, pp. 1058.)

This valuable and handsomely-printed volume cannot fail of rewarding its enterprising publishers. A general biographical dictionary, properly executed, can but find many appreciating patrons. Such a work has long been needed, and the necessity with every passing year was becoming more justly and painfully felt. A good dictionary of the kind must combine *fulness* and *accuracy*. To realize these seems to have been the aim of the present laudable attempt. And those who shall consult the work will be gratified with the degree of success which has attended the effort.

A perfect dictionary of biography we may never see. The scroll to be inscribed with the names of the departed, can never be full. Labor is unremittingly being prepared for the biographer. His is a melancholy task. From Death's trophies he must glean for his pages. In searching the records of mortality from which to make a judicious selection, the biographer must bestow much patient and assiduous toil. And after all, as he closes the volume, he is not unfrequently reminded of names which have escaped his vigilance, but which might well have challenged a conspicuous place upon the inscribed roll. Some of these omitted names we could have wished might have found their way upon the instructive pages of the volume before us. We must also express our regret that the American editor departed from the admirable plan of the original work under the judicious and able editorial of Mr. Rich,—of putting each writer's initials to the articles respectively. And the more do we regret this, since the additions in the American edition will suffer nothing in comparison with those in the original work.

We are specially pleased with the general fidelity with which character is here delineated. This is the crowning excellence of the volume, which, when combined with the completeness of the work, presents the American student with a dictionary of biography possessing unequalled merit.

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*The Three Gardens: Eden, Gethsemane, and Paradise; or, Man's Ruin, Redemption, and Restoration.* By WILLIAM ADAMS, D.D., Pastor of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church, New York. (Charles Scribner, 377 and 379 Broadway, New York, 1856. 12mo, pp. 284.)

The first of these gardens is a wide domain—the nativity of us all. We promenade its walks, gaze through its vistas, and become familiarized with many, if not most of its scenes. It must have been at one time enchantingly beautiful. Much of its original splendor, however, has long since disappeared, and left it to hideousness and foreboding fears. Still, there is a grandeur lingering over it, even in its ruins. And there is much remaining to awaken admiration, and much to love, notwithstanding the formidable desolation which has swept over it. At an auspicious hour there appeared in this garden a Being—more than human—the human shrouding the Divine—full of benignant thoughts and purposes, and opened a mysterious avenue leading

into another garden of resplendent glory. To make the transit from Eden to Gethsemane is to men of inexpressible moment; for in the latter there is everything that can regale the taste and satisfy the longings of immortality. Yet, alas! we are sorry to say, few, very few comparatively speaking, ever enter Gethsemane.

But all, without exception, who pass through the mysterious avenue into the second garden, are, at suitable periods, conducted into another garden of surpassing beauty and loveliness. This is the Paradise of God. Bunyan's pilgrims had a view of it through the perspective glass from Mt. Clear. But its transporting glories can only be realized by entering through the gate into the city. There in the full tide of celestial light shall be no night or shady noon. For

"The Light Himself shall shine  
Revealed, and God's eternal day be thine!"

Those who desire to know more of these gardens, will do well to get Dr. Adams' book. We commend it to their special favor—assuring them that on rising from its perusal they will not reflect upon us for having brought it to their notice.

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*The Baptist Denomination; its History, Doctrines, and Ordinances, its Polity, &c., &c.* By D. C. HAYNES; with an Introduction, by John Dowling, D.D. (New York: Sheldon, Blakeman & Co. Chicago: S. C. Gregg & Co. Nashville: Graves, Marks & Rutland. 1856. 12mo, pp. 356).

Our denominational literature is increasing. There is room and necessity for the increase; and we heartily hail every worthy addition to our stock.

The present volume is popular, yet it contains much valuable information and instruction which will make it useful to all classes. It meets a want which has long been felt. It is chiefly a compilation, and is very well done. With the matter of this book every Baptist ought to be acquainted, and, in fact, every Christian. It contains many volumes in one. Its study will go far to establish our own people; and as far as it shall gain an entrance among others it will tend to produce a more correct and elevated view of our history, doctrines, and practice, than has hitherto obtained. We hope for it a wide circulation.

That our readers may form some idea of the work, we will give a brief indication of its contents. It is divided into five parts, each of which is subdivided into chapters, and these again into sections. Part I. contains, in five chapters, "The origin and history of the Baptist Church, and its identity with the Primitive Church." Part II. presents, in six chapters, the doctrines and ordinances of the Baptist Church. It contains articles of faith prepared by J. N. Brown, D. D., Keach's Catechism, Pengilly on Baptism, Dr. Fuller on Infant Salvation, Dedication and Baptism, and the Dialogue between Peter and Benjamin on Close Communion, by G. F. Davis, D. D. Part III. gives an account of Baptist Church Polity, Government, and Practice. Here is much practical matter spread through six chapters. Part IV. gives a history of Baptist martyrs and persecutions, in nine chap-



ters, "from the days of John the Baptist" to those of Roger Williams and beyond, and which might have been extended "even until now." Part V. consists of three chapters. The first presents facts and statistics; the remaining two are "on the indebtedness of the world to Baptists, and their duty to the world."

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*Sermons for the People.* By F. D. HUNTINGTON, D. D., Preacher to the University and Plummer Professor of Christian Morals in the College at Cambridge. Boston: Crosby, Nichols & Co. 1856. 12mo, pp. 468.

Sermons are such common things—we all hear them every Sabbath, and so many volumes have been issued from the press—that men are apt to turn from any new publication of them as from something spiritless, and unworthy attention. But such a sentiment needs to be plucked out, and cast from us. A volume of good sermons is one of the most precious commodities in the literary market, in a minister's study, or on the centre-table of a parlor, the best reading companion of student, Christian, all men, in their leisure hours.

The sermons before us are entitled "for the people," and, what is better, they agree with the title. We find in them much, very much, to commend and be thankful for. There is no heavy argumentation, no dull exposition here, but practical and life-giving truths, which speak to the heart and conscience, and which are presented and illustrated in such a manner that the hours spent over them seem not long, and a deep, salutary and lasting impression is left. There are twenty-six in all, most of which are adapted to the times, and to all time. We could single out a few, as "Holiness to the Lord," "Acceptance of the heart," and "Trials of faith," which we esteem peculiarly dear.

Still, as it were natural to expect from a Unitarian divine, there are some things which, to our mind, are wanting in these sermons which ought to have been there, and some things are there with which we can have no sympathy. True, there are views of sin and a change of heart—views of the work of Christ, and the work of the Spirit, and views of Jesus as Divine, expressed in these sermons, such as we had scarcely expected, and which agree well with our own notions. But we *must* lay a heavier burden upon our Saviour in the cancelling of guilt than our author seems to do, and we cannot believe but that regeneration is something more than simple conversion, something radically distinct from Christian mindedness or progressive sanctification. Because of these sentiments, which are interwoven in the texture of the discourses, we are sorry to say it, we cannot recommend to our "people" *indiscriminately* the perusal of this volume. To ministers, however, and all who are established in doctrine, we heartily commend them. There is no minister whom their study may not profit, no Christian whom they are not adapted to edify, no man for whom there is not in them good.

With the fifteenth discourse, entitled, "Entrance into the Church," the text of which is, "And Chrispus believed on the Lord, with all his house" (Acts xviii. 8), of course we, as Baptists, have no sort of fellowship. In

deed, there is more in it hostile to our views than we ordinarily find in Pædobaptist works. Here we find it asserted that there were *children* in the baptized households mentioned in the New Testament.

The words of Irenæus, "Christ came to save all persons by himself who by him are *regenerated* to God—infants, and little ones, and children, and youths, and elder persons,"—are quoted as implying that, in the view of that Father, regeneration and baptism or entrance into the church are identical. Children are spoken of as becoming Christian believers, because, as it is assumed, they existed, and were baptized with their parents. The stale assumptions concerning the Abrahamic covenant are reasserted. Some children, it is said, seem to need no conversion. Baptism is made to signify entrance into the Church. Outward application of water, and not the quantity of it, is proclaimed as law for us. A longing for the time when there shall be no occasion for any other than infant baptism, is expressed. Baptized children have a right to the Supper; and efforts, it is urged, should be made to induce them at a suitable age, say fifteen, to come. Against such views our head and heart alike protest. All our Biblical study, our theological training, our ecclesiastical reading and experience, are opposed.

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*A Discussion on Methodist Episcopacy*, between REV. E. J. HAMILL, of the Alabama Conference, and Pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South Tuskegee, Ala, and SAMUEL HENDERSON, Pastor of the Tuskegee Baptist Church, and Editor of the South Western Baptist. Published at the mutual request of Baptists and Methodists. "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good."—*Paul*. (Charleston: Southern Baptist Publication Society, 229 King Street. 1856. 12mo, pp. 380.)

The letters composing the volume before us originally appeared in the columns of the "South Western Baptist" from April, with occasional intervals, to near the close of November, 1855. It would seem that their perusal made a deep and salutary impression. A very general desire prevailed that they should be published in a more permanent and accessible form. So peremptory was the demand, the gentlemen who conducted the discussion felt themselves obliged to comply. Whereby we have the light and shade of Methodist Episcopacy—the shade predominating.

The discussion is conducted with much ability, and generally with candor, and in a becoming spirit. We cannot divest ourselves of the conviction, however, that our Methodist brother has introduced in the discussion much that is quite irrelevant. Against substantial argument and objections to Methodism you are met with far-fetched, and often imaginary reasons, which with superficial minds may subserve a purpose, but with others they can only weaken the cause they were advanced to support.

Moreover, Mr. Hamill not unfrequently plants himself upon hypotheses which are not tenable. The observing must perceive that in many of his positions he is beating the air, or contending with a man of straw, which his imagination has created. Had we space it might be well to point out some of these false positions upon which he relies for the support of his cause.

But the reader will do this for himself. Mr. Henderson has the advantage of his antagonist in these particulars. He is more careful both of the positions he assumes and of the arguments adduced in their support. He states with much fairness the palpable objections to Methodist Episcopacy, and fortifies his positions generally with relevant and reliable arguments. The discussion will well repay a careful perusal.

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*Deformities and their Remedy.* By H. G. DAVIS, M. D. (New York, 1856.) Dr. Davis has made the department of surgery of which he treats in this Essay, a matter of patient and careful study. He has confined himself for many years to the treatment of cases of curvature and other diseases of the Spine. His views as set forth in the Essay before us are philosophical, and his remedies are feasible and effective. His practice has been attended with rare success. It gives us great pleasure to say from some personal knowledge of his treatment of these cases, that his method is highly meritorious and successful. We think we are doing an act of kindness to those who are suffering from spinal complaints to refer them to Dr. Davis, at No. 823 Broadway. We do this without the knowledge of Dr. D., and solely for the benefit of those who will hail such intelligence with joy.

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*Norton's Literary Register ; or, Annual Book List for 1856.* A catalogue of Books, including New Editions and Reprints published in the United States during the year 1855 ; containing titles, number of pages, prices, and names of publishers, with an Index of subjects. (New York : CHARLES B. NORTON, Agent for Libraries, 1856. 8vo, pp. 138.)

Authors, Publishers, and readers generally, will find here much to interest them in the selection of books. Those especially who are engaged in the book trade, as also those who are collecting books for private or public libraries, will be greatly aided by Norton's Literary Register. The title page is so full and comprehensive respecting the design of the work, as to require no further explanation.

Few will be able to appreciate the labors of Mr. Norton in preparing such a volume for the press. Nevertheless, he will carry with him the satisfaction of knowing that he is annually contributing very much to advance the literature of our nation in this active age.

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*Sanders' High School Reader.* New York : Ivison & Phinney, 321 Broadway. 12mo, pp. 528.

This work is the last of a new series by one who has long been a very popular author. It is divided into two parts. Part I. embraces elocution, and contains, within the space of thirty-four pages, sections on articulation, accent, and emphasis, inflections, modulation, and rhetorical pause ; connected therewith are questions. Part II. consists of one hundred and sixty-three exercises in rhetorical reading, in prose and poetry, selected from the writings of eminent authors—English and American, living and dead. The selection of pieces appears to be judicious. A very few notes are appended. We cordially commend the volume to the attention of parents,



teachers, and all who may be concerned in the education of youth. The typographical execution is beautiful.

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*The Elements of Character.* By MARY E. CHANDLER. Fourth edition. (Boston : Crosby, Nichols & Co. 16mo, pp. 234.)

This little book contains many excellent thoughts, clearly expressed. Its contents are arranged under the following heads : Character, the Human Trinity, Thought, Imagination, Affection, Life, Conversation, Manners, Companionship. We should have preferred that the reference to the Divine Trinity in the article on the Human had not been made. It seems to savor, though unintentionally we doubt not, of Sabellianism. Decidedly too favorable a judgment, we think, is given in the article on "Life" of some doctrines of Swedenborg and of the position of Swedenborgians. We cannot recognize them as they there are as a sect of Christians, nor can we sympathize with three or four allusions, made in the same connection, to their belief. These, however, are but incidental. In the main, we commend the book to those who love to think and improve.

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*Sunbeam Stories.* (Boston and Cambridge : James Munroe & Co. 1856. 16mo, pp. 395.)

This is a sweet little juvenile, or rather we might say, a *large* one. It consists of several tales, published separately at first, but now collected in one, with illustrations. It will charm the young folks and do them good. Nor is it without attractions to older heads. Its author is Matilda Planche, now "the wife of the Rev. Mr. Mackarness, an Episcopalian clergyman in one of the shire towns of England." We are glad to understand that it is enjoying a suitable popularity.

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*The Universe no Desert, the Earth no Monopoly ;* preceded by a Scientific Exposition of the Unity of Plan in Creation. Two volumes in one. (Boston and Cambridge : James Munroe & Co. 12mo, pp. 130 and 239.)

This work has been in the market some time, but has hitherto not received a notice in this journal. Who its author is we are not informed, but its statements of facts appear to be generally reliable. It is scientific, but written in a theologic interest. We were somewhat disappointed in its perusal, for it winds up dreamily. It begins with pure science, proceeds to rational speculation, and ends in a long parade of the opinions of Emanuel Swedenborg. Its chief object is to prove that other worlds are inhabited. This question has been much canvassed of late, and we have nothing to add on either side. Much is to be said both for and against. It seems to us of little moment to which theory we give the preference. No Biblical or dogmatic interest is put in jeopardy, or advantaged, in either case. Some of the minor and incidental conclusions or speculations of this book we would not be considered as endorsing.

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*The Marble-Worker's Manual ;* designed for the use of Marble-Workers, Builders, and Owners of Houses. Translated from the French by M. L.

Booth, with an Appendix concerning American Marbles. (New York: Sheldon, Blakeman & Co. 1856. 18mo, pp. 256.)

Reviewers will never build marble palaces, but review readers may, quite possibly; wherefore, we take pleasure in introducing to their notice the above little work. Marble is coming into very general requisition in our day, and most people need to learn something concerning it. No treatise with which we are acquainted presents this topic so fully and yet so briefly—so cheaply and yet so accurately—as this does. We cheerfully commend it to any of our readers who may be interested in the production or use of marble, as their most available and an invaluable guide.

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*Lectures Read to the Seniors in Harvard College.* By EDWARD T. CHANNING, late Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory. (Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 1856. 12mo, pp. 298.) This is a work on Rhetoric and Oratory of great interest. It cannot take the place of Whately's *Elements* as a text-book in our high schools and colleges; but all who shall study those elements will be in no small degree benefited by a careful reading of the Lectures of the Boylston Professor. Mr. Channing stood deservedly high, in the department assigned him, for more than thirty years; during which period he won for himself an enviable reputation for purity of style and excellent taste in refined literature. But style and good taste are not the only things which commend these lectures to favorable notice. The manner in which the various subjects are presented, and the ability with which they are unfolded to the mind of the student and impressed upon his attention, form an important feature of the book. The volume contains a brief but deeply-interesting memoir of the author of these lectures.

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*A Treatise on English Punctuation*; designed for Letter Writers, Authors, Printers, and Correctors of the Press; and for the Use of Schools and Academies. With an Appendix, containing Rules on the Use of Capitals, a List of Abbreviations, Hints on the Preparation of Copy and on Proof-Reading, Specimen of Proof-Sheet, &c. By JOHN WILSON. Eighth edition. (Boston: Crosby, Nichols & Co. 1856. 12mo, pp. 334.) The title of this work is sufficiently explanatory of its design to induce all who are in need of such a treatise to make it their own. We know of no superior work of the kind to recommend to our readers.

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We have received from James Munroe & Co., Boston, Mass., *Elements of Rhetoric*, comprising an Analysis of the Laws of Moral Evidence and of Persuasion, with Rules for Argumentative Composition and Elocution. By RICHARD WHATELY, D.D. And *Elements of Logic*, comprising the Substance of the Article in the "Encyclopedia Metropolitana," with Additions, &c. By RICHARD WHATELY, D.D. Archbishop Whately's *Elements of Rhetoric* and *Elements of Logic* are too well known and appreciated to require further commendation than the bare mention that Munroe & Co. have issued new editions of these standard works, as revised by their distinguished author. Our high schools and colleges have, to a large extent, adopted them

as text-books, and not without sufficient reasons. They are well adapted to the ends for which they were prepared. In these departments of learning Dr. Whately has no successful rival.

*P. Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica et Æneis. Virgil; with English Notes, prepared for the Use of Classical Schools and Colleges. By FRANCIS BROWN, A M. Stereotype edition. (Boston: James Munroe & Co. 1855. 8vo, pp. 600.)* This is the most beautifully-printed edition of Virgil that we have ever met with. The youthful student may be thankful that he has no longer to pore over the dingy, ill-printed, blurred pages of most former editions of this generally-received classic.

More than 250 pages of the volume are devoted to critical and explanatory notes. These, not only from their copiousness, but also from their substantial character, will be highly appreciated. Much and patient labor has also been expended in correcting the text for this edition. We commend the work to those in the pursuit of classical learning.

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#### ARTICLE VIII.—LITERARY AND THEOLOGICAL INTELLIGENCE.

##### UNITED STATES.

A COMMENTARY on the New Testament, popular rather than critical, is, we learn, about to be commenced by Drs. C. Hodge and J. A. Alexander, of Princeton. Dr. Hodge's part will be the Epistles: Dr. Alexander's the Gospels, Acts, and Revelations. They will be issued in duodecimo volumes. The first will be on the Acts, by Dr. Alexander; and will be published in the autumn, by Mr. C. Scribner. The next will be on the 1st of Corinthians, by Dr. Hodge, and will be issued in the spring of 1857, by Carter & Brothers.

It gives us pleasure to announce that the Commentaries of Olshausen, of which we gave intimation in our last that it might be, are in the press of Sheldon, Blakeman & Co. The first volume will be forthcoming at an early day. Some delay is occasioned by the fact that all the proof-sheets are sent to Rochester for correction.

Messrs. Crosby & Nichols, of Boston, have announced the Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians, Galatians, and Romans, with critical Notes and Dissertations, by Benjamin Jowett, Regius Professor of Greek in Baliol College, Oxford. The writings of this gentleman have caused considerable sensation recently in England; and he has been asked to resign the thirty-nine articles, which he has singularly enough done. His statements of belief are, judging from the extracts we have seen, very different from those to which our orthodox ears are accustomed. Liberals in Christianity, and all who love to scent out heresy, will probably receive these books with avidity.

The same house also announce the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians



by Rev. A. P. Stanley, now canon of Canterbury, and author of a life of Dr. Arnold, &c., &c.

Commentaries on the Psalms, by Tholuck, which have recently been translated and published in England, are announced by W. C. & A. Martien.

We are pleased to notice that the Rev. G. D. Abbott, of the Spingler Institute, owner of the four original paintings, by Cole, entitled "The Voyage of Life," has published four large engravings of them. These have a religious interest. There are souls to whom those paintings speak louder than many sermons.

The sermons of Rev. Mr. Spurgeon, which we have before announced, were in the press of Messrs. Sheldon, Blakeman & Co., are not quite ready yet. They will be out, probably, ere these sheets reach some of our subscribers. They are to be accompanied with an introduction, by Rev. E. L. Magoon, D.D.

A new life of the Rev. Geo. Whitfield, with special reference to his labors in this country, is about to be issued by the American Tract Society. It has been prepared by the Rev. Dr. Belcher, of Philadelphia.

Dr. Belcher has also in a forward state, we are happy to be informed, a popular history of the Baptists of America. It will be issued in one volume, 12mo.

The Rev. F. Wilson, of Baltimore, has prepared a small, but timely volume, on the question, "How far may a Christian indulge in popular amusements?"

Another little work on "Restricted Communion," has just come before the public, from the pen of Rev. J. B. Taylor, of Richmond, Va.

A discourse from the pen of the Rev. Dr. W. R. Williams, entitled "Missions needful to the Church," has been issued by Carter & Brothers.

Since our last a small volume, "Campbellism re-examined," by Rev. J. B. Jeter, has appeared, published by Sheldon, Blakeman & Co. We had expected an article for our present number on Campbellism, embracing a notice of this recent issue. But we have been disappointed in this, through the sickness of the gentleman engaged to prepare it.

The rise of the Dutch Republic, in 3 vols., by J. L. Motley, published in this country and England, has attracted considerable attention. The subject is covered in a general way by Mr. Prescott, in his Philip the Second, and is one of interest. We have by us an article upon it, which we had hoped to have found room for in our present number. We will endeavor yet to produce it.

Mr. J. B. Desplace, an intimate friend of Lamartine, is now in the United States, for the purpose of facilitating the establishment and circulation of a translation of the latter's monthly magazine. He has been received with favor by our leading literary men, and we trust he may be entirely successful. Lamartine, we are sorry to see it stated, has become sadly reduced, owing, chiefly, to the failure of the vine crops in France during five successive years.

Harper & Brothers have announced a work which will be looked for with

considerable interest, and which we intimated in our last had appeared in Germany: Bansen's "Signs of the Times." It is translated by Miss Winkworth.

Some large works are in course of republication, as Wilkes' Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition round the World; in 5 vols. 8vo. It is to be superbly illustrated. The Indian Tribes of North America, by H. R. Schoolcraft, in 5 vols. 4to. Works of Benjamin Franklin, in 10 vols. Napier's History of the Peninsular War, in 5 vols.

Fremont's Explorations in Utah, California and Oregon, are to be republished. Hitherto they have been known only through Congressional copies. Also Col. Benton is engaged, it is said, in preparing the Debates of Congress for general circulation. They now occupy about 100 volumes; and will be reduced by the able Senator to 12 or 15, without, probably, losing any of their real value.

Novels, we observe, are still in demand. Out of the 2,000 books published in the United States during the year 1855, over half were of this class. A new duodecimo edition of Dickens, is in course of publication in Philadelphia, to be comprised in 24 vols. Also, a new edition of Waverley, in Boston.

"Sin and Redemption," by D. N. Sheldon, we notice, has been republished in Boston.

Theodore Parker is said to be engaged in a new work, "The development of religious ideas among different races."

New works have appeared in this country during the past quarter, the product of those voluminous and always welcome authors, R. Trench, and Archbishop Whately.

Discourses of Bishop Wainwright, with a Memoir, are announced by Appleton & Co.

A small volume, entitled "Hints on Missions to India," by Rev. Myron Winslow, for thirty-seven years a Missionary, has been published by M. W. Dodd. It is important as bearing upon questions which are now agitating Mission Boards and Societies.

Hume's History of England has been republished in Philadelphia, in two vols. 8vo, collated with Lingard's.

A cyclopædia of Modern Travel during the last fifty years, has been completed under the supervision of that competent hand, Bayard Taylor.

According to a recent estimate, the public libraries of New York contain upwards of 330,000 volumes.

The late Dr. Choules' library, consisting of over 5,000 volumes, has been sold during the past quarter. Several of the books brought very high prices—Cromwelliana, \$47. There were 12 volumes that brought \$173 75. In the mass, however, the prices did not realize expectations.

Charles Scribner has announced, to be contained in one volume, the lives of Gibbon, Goethe and Goldsmith, written by eminent authors, and recently first published in the 10th volume of the new edition of the Encyclo-

pædia Britannica. This volume is to be followed by others on various themes, from the same source.

A premium of \$100 has been offered by a Congregational Society, at Hartford, for a tract on Slavery, not exceeding eight pages, and fit to be published by the American Tract Society, in accordance with Article I. of the Constitution. The adjudicators are, Rev. Drs. Joel, Hawes and R. Turnbull, Hartford.

Messrs. Murphy & Co., of Baltimore, have reprinted the discussions on the questions: Is the Roman Catholic Religion, in any or all of its doctrines and principles, inimical to civil or religious liberty? by Archbishop J. Hughes; and is the Presbyterian Religion? &c., by Rev. J. Breckenridge.

The works of Dr. O. Winslow are in course of republication in Philadelphia.

According to Norton's list of books published in the United States during the year 1855, 234 of the number were Theological.

#### FOREIGN.

Mr. Macaulay's recent volumes are very generally reviewed in the English periodicals, as well as in those of our own country. He has numerous assailants on various points, in reference to which he is said to be preparing a rejoinder. His defence will be looked for with interest. Croker has just replied to his attack upon his Boswell. In common with our cotemporaries we have admitted an article on Macaulay in our present number; which will not, we trust, prove unacceptable to our readers.

Intelligence of the death of Sir William Hamilton is received with profound regret. He stood, at his death, among the first in the world in his own chosen field, metaphysics—both speculative and historical. He had long been suffering from paralysis; but finally died of congestion of the brain. He has left in a fit state for publication his Lectures.

"Principles of Psychology," by Herbert Spencer, have been published, in which he is said to grapple with Sir William Hamilton's theory of consciousness.

Volumes 4 and 5 of Merivale's history of Rome under the Empire, are published.

The annals of Ireland, by J. O. Donovan, are to be reprinted in 7 vols. The first edition was too expensive for general circulation. The republication is to be reduced in price from \$70 to about \$20. The cheap form will contain the same matter and illustrations.

A new edition of that very useful work, "Horne's Introduction to the Critical Study of the Holy Scriptures," is announced. Also, Kitto's Encyclopædia; and the works of Dean Swift.

Volume I. of Wardlaw's systematic theology, is announced.

A new book of Hymns for Baptist Churches has been prepared, containing nearly 1,000 selections.

Dr. Owen's Works, in 24 vols., have been issued in Edinburgh. The same are to be obtained in this country with the imprint of Carter & Brothers.



A new edition of John Howe's works, to be comprized in 9 vols., is announced in Edinburgh.

A translation of Guizot's *R. Cromwell, and the Restoration of Charles the 2d*, is published by Bentley.

Professor Stahl has appeared, with the defence of a national church, against Bunsen. The 3d volume of his *Egypt's place in Universal History*, has gone to press. He is also preparing, in further answer of Strauss, a *Life of Christ*.

The burning of the dead is the subject of a treatise by Dr. T. P. Trusen. He advocates the revival of the funeral pyre.

Cheap railway literature is now published in Germany, as well as in France.

A German translation of *Hiawatha* has been executed and published by Frielgrath, a friend of Longfellow.

The works of Schelling are to be collected and published.

The poet Heinrich Heine's literary remains are announced. A new edition, also, of Kepler's Works.

A copy of *Voltaire* in 90 vols., with 12,000 engravings, chiefly portraits, has recently been sold. It brought £223.

That voluminous historian, M. Cœffigne, has another volume in the press, *Catherine de Medicis*.

"*The Sensualist Philosophy of the 18th century*," is the title of a new work by Victor Cousin.

The works of Galileo are to be published, for the first time, in 15 vols., under the supervision of Professor Alberti.

Several letters of Napoleon Bonaparte, which he wrote in his youth, are said to have been recently discovered in Corsica.

Considerable activity is beginning to manifest itself in the department of Modern Greek Literature, both in Greece itself and in other parts of the world.